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The Historical Bible

THE KINGS AND PROPHETS

OF

ISRAEL AND JUDAH

FROM THE DIVISION OF THE KINGDOM TO THE BABYLONIAN EXILE

THE HISTORICAL BIBLE

By CHARLES FOSTER KENT, Ph.D.
Professor of Biblical Literature in Yale University

ARRANGEMENT OF VOLUMES:

I. **The Heroes and Crises of Early Hebrew History.** From the Creation to the Death of Moses. (*Ready.*)

II. **The Founders and Rulers of United Israel.** From the Death of Moses to the Division of the Hebrew Kingdom. (*Ready.*)

III. **The Kings and Prophets of Israel and Judah.** From the Division of the Kingdom to the Babylonian Exile. (*Ready.*)

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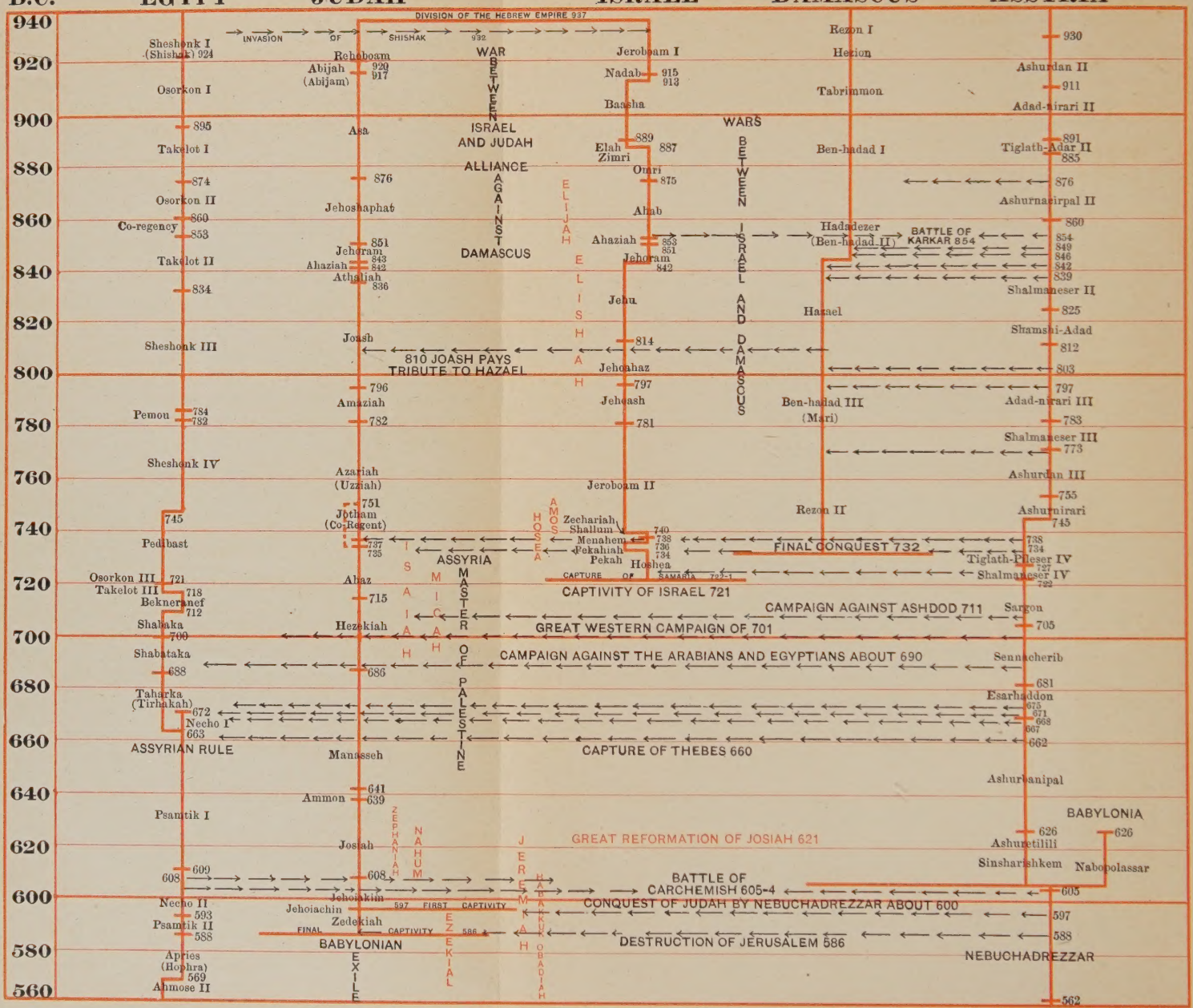

HEBREW AND CONTEMPORARY CHRONOLOGY FROM THE DIVISION OF THE HEBREW EMPIRE TO THE BABYLONIAN EXILE

The Historical Bible

THE KINGS AND PROPHETS

OF

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FROM THE DIVISION OF THE KINGDOM TO THE BABYLONIAN EXILE

BY

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WOOLSEY PROFESSOR OF BIBLICAL LITERATURE IN YALE UNIVERSITY

WITH MAPS AND CHART

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PREFACE

The three centuries and a half, which began with the division of the Hebrew empire and extended to the Babylonian exile, were in many ways the most important period in Israel's history. It was during this epoch that the Israelites ceased to be a provincial people, limited in their outlook to the narrow horizon of Palestine. Events over which they had little control brought them into close contact with the great world powers of the day, thereby vastly broadening their faith, as well as their vision of history and of their relation to the human race. It was a period marked by supreme political, social and religious crises, which fundamentally transformed Israel's religion and institutions. These crises called forth the great ethical prophets of the eighth and seventh centuries B.C.; and their work and teachings made Israel's experience during these trying years one of the most significant chapters in human history.

These prophets were the conscience of their nation, its guides in the hour of peril, and the heralds of those great ethical and social principles which are the eternal foundations of law and society. The social evils with which they dealt were in many ways startlingly similar to those which still survive in our modern Christian civilization. Interpreted into the language of the twentieth century, their messages anticipate the conclusions and teachings of our keenest and most progressive social teachers. In pointing out popular errors in the existing social system, and in placing the responsibility for the prevailing evils squarely on the shoulders of the rich and powerful, who were using their authority and influence, not in behalf of the common welfare, but rather for their own personal advantage or for that of their class, they spoke to the present as well as to their own age. In their character and life-work, as well as in their words, they embodied the noblest ideals of intelligent, unselfish and effective patriotism. They were men who not only saw the truth but were equally able and effective in proclaiming it by word and deed. When once their aims and real character are understood, these peerless

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patriots of ancient Israel will inspire anew the live men and women of today, to devote themselves patiently, unselfishly, and persistently to eliminating the civic and social evils which disgrace our modern civilization, and to realizing in city and state the eternal ideals of justice and common service.

The Hebrew prophets did not work for a new social order, but they did demand that each individual and each class should contribute their part to the common good. They also closely blended religion and ethics, and declared that a faith which did not find expression in justice and mercy was mere hypocrisy. Thus they both ethicized and socialized religion, adjusting it squarely to the universal needs of society and the individual.

In the experience of the prophets and of their nation during these trying years, it is also possible to trace more clearly than in any other period of human history the process by which the Divine Father revealed and still reveals his character and will to men. That revelation was neither abstract nor mechanical, but rather a gradual opening of the mental and spiritual vision of certain men who were ready to learn and to act. They correspond in the realm of morals and religion to the world's great scientists and inventors. The Hebrew prophets were men who, like the shepherd Amos, had been taught by occupation and experience to be ever on the watch, to interpret each significant sign, to see facts as they were; and then, when conviction deepened into certainty, to act courageously yet tactfully, and with a supreme unconcern for their personal interests. To such men God revealed his laws and purposes, sometimes through the great crises which overtook their nation, sometimes through the personal experience of the men who were thus called to be prophets—the spokesmen and interpreters of Jehovah to his race.

The wealth of historical and contemporary biblical literature has made the process of selection difficult; and yet the aim has been to leave out no really vital and significant passages. The larger literature and the reasons for the selections which have been made will be found in the corresponding volumes of the author's *Student's Old Testament*. There the student may also trace the textual basis for the renderings which have been adopted. In endeavoring to reproduce in an alien language the powerful literary figures and immortal messages of the Hebrew prophets, every translator must be deeply impressed by the inadequacy of his results. Often later scribes also failed to catch the meaning of the original or to transcribe it accurately, so that any translation based

simply on the present Hebrew text does not in many cases convey the thought of the ancient writers. In these cases, the evidence of the context and the testimony of the early translations, such as the Greek, Syriac and the Latin, are of the greatest value.

Later Hebrew scribes have also paid their tribute to the importance of the original writings of the prophets by amplifying them at many points. This is especially true, for example, in the book of Jeremiah, where the total Hebrew text is one-eighth longer than that of the older version represented by the Greek translation. In such cases, the shorter Greek version, which contains all the essential facts without the obscuring repetitions found in the Hebrew, has in general been followed, with a corresponding gain not only in clearness and literary beauty but also in economy of space and fidelity to the original.

The endeavor has been made to correct a fundamental defect in the current translations by indicating the poetic character of the prophetic addresses. With the exception of the priest-prophet Ezekiel, the pre-exilic prophets apparently always spoke in the language of poetry. The poetic form added vastly not only to the beauty and effectiveness, but also to the clear understanding of their addresses; for, in keeping with the fundamental characteristics of Hebrew poetry, the second line of each couplet repeats the same thought in similar or opposite terms, or else develops still further the idea presented in the first line. Hence, if the meaning of one line is obscure, it is illustrated or interpreted by that of the corresponding member of the couplet.

In addition to this parallelism or rhythm of ideas, Hebrew, like English poetry, is characterized by symmetry in the number of beats or accented syllables in each succeeding line. The three-beat measure is the one most commonly used. Sometimes, to express great excitement, as when the approach of an enemy is announced, the quick two-beat measure is employed. In appealing to the reason, or in more deliberative passages, the calmer, more formal four-beat measure is used. To express deep emotion, whether that of sorrow, as of the mourners lamenting over the bier of the dead, or great joy and elation, the five-beat measure is introduced. This consists ordinarily of a sentence of three beats followed by a clause of two beats, suggesting the catching of the breath or an exclamation under the influence of overwhelming feeling.

That the reader may distinguish at a glance these different metres, lines of the five-beat measure have been printed so as to begin at the extreme left of the page, those of the four-beat measure have been indented the equivalent of two or three letters, the three-beat a space

equivalent to four or five letters, and the two-beat to seven or eight letters.

In the present volume the biblical passages are taken from so many different books that references have been introduced in connection with the side-headings, to aid the student in readily identifying these quotations. As in the preceding volumes, detailed verses can be distinguished by referring to the *Student's Old Testament* to which references are given under each chapter heading in the Table of Contents. The attention of the teachers is also called to the general questions and to the subjects for special research in the Appendix, where suggestions and directions are given for additional and more technical study.

It is impossible to indicate in detail my indebtedness to the scores of Old Testament scholars, whose work has revealed the true character and messages of the Hebrew prophets. The names of the more important English and American contributors are found in connection with the list of books for reference in the Appendix. I owe a more personal debt to Professor Irving F. Wood, of Smith College, and Professor J. F. Genung, of Amherst College, who have generously read the proof of the present volume and offered many practical suggestions.

C. F. K.

YALE UNIVERSITY,
April, 1909.

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THE HISTORY OF NORTHERN ISRAEL

§ LXI. THE DIVISION OF THE HEBREW EMPIRE

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Now as soon as Jeroboam the son of Nebat heard [that Solomon was dead]—for he was still in Egypt, whither he had fled from the presence of King Solomon, and he dwelt in Egypt—he returned at once to his native town, Zeredah in Mount Ephraim.

2. Demands of the northerners ($1.^{3b-5}$)

And Rehoboam went to Shechem, for all Israel had come to Shechem to make him king. And they said to Rehoboam, Your father made our yoke intolerable. Now therefore make the intolerable service of your father and the heavy yoke he laid upon us lighter, and we will serve you. And he said to them, Go away for three days, then come again to me. So the people went away.

3. Counsel of the old men ($^{6.\ 7}$)

And King Rehoboam took counsel with the old men who had stood before Solomon his father during his lifetime, saying, What answer do you advise me to give this people? And they said to him, If now you will be a servant to this people, and will serve them, and give them a favorable answer, then they will be your servants forever.

4. Counsel of the young men ($^{8-11}$)

But he rejected the counsel which the old men had given him, and took counsel with the young men who had grown up with him and had stood before him. And he said to them, What answer do you advise us to give to this people, who have spoken to me, saying, 'Make the yoke that your father put upon us lighter'? And the young men who had grown up with him said to him, Thus must you answer this people who have said to you, 'Your father made our yoke heavy, but you make it lighter for us'; thus must you say to them, 'My little finger is thicker than my father's loins! And now, whereas my father loaded you with a heavy yoke, I will make your yoke heavier; my father chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scourges.'

5. Rehoboam's tyrannical reply (12-15)

So when all the people came to Rehoboam the third day, as the king bade, saying, Come to me the third day, the king answered the people harshly, and did not follow the counsel which the old men had given him, but spoke to them according to the counsel of the young men, saying, My father made your yoke heavy, but I also will make your yoke still heavier; my father chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scourges. So the king gave no heed to the people; for it was a thing brought about of Jehovah to confirm his word, which Jehovah spoke by Ahijah the Shilonite to Jeroboam the son of Nebat.

6. Rejection of Rehoboam by the northern tribes (16-19)

And when all Israel saw that the king gave no heed to them, the people answered the king, saying,

What share have we in David?
We have no claim in the son of Jesse!
To your tents, O Israel!
Now care for your own house, O David!

So the Israelites went to their homes. Then King Rehoboam sent Adoniram, who was over the men subject to forced labor; but all Israel stoned him to death. Thereupon King Rehoboam quickly mounted his chariot in order to flee to Jerusalem. So Israel rebelled against the house of David to the present day.

7. Election of Jeroboam king (20. 25)

And as soon as all Israel heard that Jeroboam had returned, they sent and called him to the assembly of the people and made him king over all Israel. None remained loyal to the house of David except the tribe of Judah. And Jeroboam fortified Shechem in the hill country of Ephraim, and dwelt there. Afterwards he went out from there and fortified Penuel.

8. Establishment of royal sanctuaries (26. 27a. 28-30)

Then Jeroboam said to himself, Now the sovereignty will revert to the house of David. If this people go up to offer sacrifices in the temple of Jehovah at Jerusalem, then will the heart of this people turn again to their lord, even to Rehoboam king of Judah; and they will kill me. So the king took counsel with himself, and made two calves of gold, and said to the people, You have gone up to Jerusalem long enough. Behold your gods, O Israel, which brought

you up from the land of Egypt! And he set up the one in Bethel, and the other in Dan. And this thing became a sin to Israel, for the people went to worship before the one, even to Dan.

And he made houses of high places, and made priests from among all the people, who were not of the sons of Levi. And Jeroboam ordained a feast in the eighth month, on the fifteenth day of the month, like the feast that is in Judah, and he went up to the altar; so he did in Bethel, sacrificing to the calves that he had made; and he placed in Bethel the priests of the high places that he had made. 9. Appointment of priests (31. 32)

Now the other acts of Jeroboam, how he carried on wars, how he ruled, they are already recorded in the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel. And the time during which Jeroboam reigned was twenty-two years. Then he slept with his fathers, and Nadab his son became king in his place. 10. Jeroboam's reign (14 19. 20)

I. The Records of Northern Israel's History. From the period of the division onward, the late prophetic editor of the books of Kings weaves together the history of the two Hebrew kingdoms. For the first two centuries he devotes his chief attention to Northern Israel. His method is that of the earlier Hebrew historians. Where ancient histories were available, he quotes verbatim the sections adapted to his purpose. In addition to the state annals of Northern and Southern Israel, to which he frequently refers, he evidently had access to certain originally independent biographies of the more important kings and prophets, such as Jeroboam, Ahab, Jehu, Hezekiah, Elijah, Elisha and Isaiah. The result is that his history is very brief and incomplete at certain points and very full and detailed at others. Fortunately the more important epochs are those most fully treated.

The citations from the older sources are incorporated by the editor in a stereotyped framework, which gives the date of the accession of each king, the length of the reign, and certain other important facts which he seems to have drawn from the state annals of the two kingdoms. To these data he adds his own estimate of the character and policy of each ruler. His basis of judgment is that of the Deuteronomic law which makes Jerusalem the only centre where Jehovah could be rightly worshipped. Hence all the kings of Northern Israel, and most of the kings of Judah, who regarded the local sanctuaries outside

Jerusalem as perfectly legitimate, are condemned by him as traitors to the religion of their race.

The historical records in the books of Kings are richly supplemented by the sermons of contemporary prophets like Amos and Hosea. These sermons are like mirrors, reflecting in detail the many-sided life of the nation, and make it possible to view political, social, and moral conditions in Israel through the eyes of its most enlightened statesmen and leaders, and to interpret the real significance of facts and forces with the aid of their inspired insight.

The voluminous contemporary literature which has been discovered in the ruins of ancient Babylonia and Assyria also furnishes the data for studying Israel's history from the point of view of the conquerors, whose approach aroused the prophets to speak and precipitated the great crises which made Israel's history forever significant.

II. **Rehoboam's Fatal Policy.** The immediate cause of the division of the Hebrew empire was the short-sighted policy of Solomon's successor, Rehoboam. According to Hebrew usage, a king could not be finally established on the throne until his choice was approved by his subjects. Thus David had been chosen by the elders of Israel, and his son Solomon had been introduced to the people to receive popular acceptance and approval. Resting on their constitutional rights, the tribes of the north demanded that Rehoboam should meet them at the leading northern city of Shechem; and to their demand he was obliged to accede. Before accepting him as their king, they asked him to give them a definite assurance that he would not continue his father's policy of onerous taxation and forced labor. Unfortunately, Rehoboam did not listen to the counsel of his oldest and most experienced advisers, but followed instead the advice of the young men who, like himself, had been brought up in the enervating and artificial atmosphere of Solomon's court, and who were ignorant of the actual conditions and the dominant forces in the empire. His blunt assertion that he would rule as an absolute despot naturally led to his rejection by the northern tribes. He also committed the fatal error of sending Adoniram, who had charge of the forced labor, to treat with them. The result was that Rehoboam was obliged to flee ignominiously back to Jerusalem, king only of Judah and of the territory of Benajmin lying immediately adjacent to his capital.

III. **The Underlying Causes of the Division.** The division was but the reopening of the old breach between the northern and southern tribes. In the earlier days of the settlement, each group of tribes had

independently fought its own battles and conquered its own territory. A zone of Canaanite cities, with Jebus (Jerusalem) as its centre, had, even to the days of David, separated the north and the south. The physical characteristics of the land and the natural products of Northern Israel were so different from those of the south that they produced a distinct type of life and civilization. The broad fertile fields of the north supported a prosperous, luxury-loving people. Their highways of commerce were open wide to the traders who came from the adjacent lands, bringing the products, the customs, and the ideas of the neighboring Semitic nations. Judah, on the contrary, faced toward the desert and kept in closer touch with the life and thought of its nomadic ancestors; while its rocky, barren hills produced a more austere and hardy type of civilization and religion.

The strong ancient rivalry between the tribes of the north and of the south had repeatedly found expression in the days of David. Solomon's policy, however, crystallized the jealousy latent in the north into bitter discontent. In refusing to accept Solomon's son as king, the northerners evidently had the support of their prophets. Ahijah's act in tearing his mantle asunder, in order to give ten parts to Jeroboam, symbolizes the deliberate conviction and choice of the prophets. With their profound insight into the politics of their age, they could not have been blind to the dangers and disadvantages which would inevitably result from the disruption of the empire; yet they chose it as the lesser of two evils. Solomon's policy threatened to wrest from the people the hereditary rights of the individual and to crush that noble democratic spirit which Israel had inherited from its nomadic past. It also meant disloyalty to Jehovah; for, in the minds of his people, he was fast being placed on an equality with the gods of the neighboring nations. To preserve their faith and freedom, the religious and political leaders of the north were therefore ready to turn their backs upon the splendor and glories of a united Israel and to face the hostile world alone.

IV. **Events of Jeroboam's Reign.** Having rejected the house of David, the northern tribes naturally turned to their most prominent leader. Jeroboam, although of humble origin, had already shown himself the champion of the people against Solomon's despotic policy. Like Saul and David, he was called by popular choice to lay the foundations of the kingdom over which he ruled. Shechem, the largest city of central Israel, was at first made the capital of the new kingdom. It was beautifully situated in the broad valley which separated Mount

Gerizim from Mount Ebal, and was watered by the rushing streams which gushed forth from the overhanging mountain to the south. It was impossible, however, to defend it from hostile attack. Although the biblical narrative is silent, it is clear from the Egyptian records that both Northern and Southern Israel, early in the reign of Jeroboam I, were overrun by an army led by Shishak, king of Egypt, whose conquests extended to the plain of Esdraelon on the north and Mahanaim east of the Jordan. The object of this invasion was plunder rather than conquest, and both of the Hebrew kingdoms appear to have suffered severely (*cf.* § LXXIII [ii]). The statement that Jeroboam "went out from Shechem and fortified Penuel" may reflect the fact that he was forced in the presence of this Egyptian invader to transfer his capital to the famous old sanctuary east of the Jordan.

V. **Jeroboam's Religious Policy.** The late prophetic editor of the books of Kings bitterly condemns Jeroboam because he set up two calves of gold at the ancient sanctuaries of Bethel and Dan. The act, however, was undoubtedly commended by the political and religious leaders of his day. In so doing he was but following the precedent of Gideon and Solomon. The calves or bulls overlaid with gold were probably similar in form to the cherubim which guarded the ark in the temple at Jerusalem. The bull appears to have been a common object in ancient Semitic symbolism. Whether they were intended to represent the clouds on which Jehovah was borne, as he came to deliver his people, or symbolized the strength and creative power of the Deity, it is clear that Jeroboam had no intentions of setting aside the national worship of Jehovah. In selecting two sanctuaries, one in the north and the other in the extreme south of his kingdom to suit the convenience of his subjects, and in making these sacred places national shrines, he showed his zeal for the worship of Israel's God. Many other sanctuaries continued to exist in the land; but henceforth those at Dan and Bethel were provided with special priests appointed and doubtless supported by the king. They stood in the same relation to the other high places of Israel, as did Solomon's temple to the sanctuaries of Judah. In offering the public sacrifices in behalf of the nation on the great feast days, Jeroboam, like Solomon before him, was simply discharging one of his duties as the religious head of the nation.

VI. **Character of Jeroboam's Reign.** Analyzing the later biblical testimony in the light of contemporary customs and conditions, it seems clear that Jeroboam was devoted to the welfare of his kingdom. The oft-repeated condemnation of the later prophetic author of the books of

Kings is from the point of view of the southern kingdom and the Jerusalem temple which this writer regarded as the one legitimate sanctuary.

Jeroboam's dynasty, however, enjoyed none of the prestige which had gathered about the house of David. His kingdom also lacked coherence and natural defences. Instead, on every side its broad valleys invited the attack of foreign invaders. Chance references indicate that the Philistines again renewed their intermittent attacks upon Northern Israel. Hence, to maintain his position and to hold together the loosely connected tribes of the north, Jeroboam was obliged to contend constantly with difficult problems within, as well as with foes without his kingdom. The proof of the strength of his character and policy is the fact that for over two decades he maintained himself against these many odds, and was able at his death to hand down his kingdom intact to his son Nadab.

VII. **Effects of the Division.** The division of the empire was one of the great turning points in Hebrew history. By one stroke it largely undid the work of Saul and David. The old breach between the north and the south, thus opened, was never again permanently closed. The Hebrews never ceased to dream of world-wide conquest; but the actual course of history bore them to a very different goal. Each of the two Hebrew kingdoms, weakened by civil war, was henceforth exposed to almost constant attack from strong foes. As a result of these protracted wars, their strength was exhausted and they became weaker and weaker until they were ground down under the iron heel of the Assyrians and Babylonians.

The division ultimately meant for the Hebrews political ruin and exile; but to each of the kingdoms in turn it brought tragic yet profoundly significant experiences, which opened the eyes of the race to new visions of Jehovah's character and demands, and impressed indelibly upon their consciousness the great ethical and spiritual principles which made them a prophet nation. In the bitter school of experience, they learned at last to pity and succor the afflicted. Victims of injustice and greed, they became the champions of ethical righteousness. Disappointed in their national and political hopes, they found the eternal God of love and those spiritual joys which far transcend all material glories.

§ LXII. THE MILITARY DYNASTIES OF NORTHERN ISRAEL

1. Nadab's assassination (I K. 15 25. 27-29a)

And Nadab the son of Jeroboam became king in the second year of Asa king of Judah, and he reigned over Israel two years. And Baasha the son of Ahijah, of the house of Issachar, conspired against him, and Baasha smote him at Gibbethon, which belonged to the Philistines, while Nadab and all Israel were laying siege to Gibbethon. So in the third year of Asa king of Judah Baasha slew him, and became king in his place. But as soon as he became king, he smote all the house of Jeroboam. He did not leave of Jeroboam's house a single soul which he did not destroy.

2. Baasha's condemnation and death (15 33.32 16 5.6)

In the third year of Asa king of Judah Baasha the son of Ahijah became king over all Israel in Tirzah, and reigned twenty-four years. And there was war between Asa and Baasha king of Israel all their days. Now the other acts of Baasha, and what he did and his mighty deeds, are they not recorded in the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel? Moreover, by the prophet Jehu the son of Hanani the word of Jehovah came against Baasha and against his house, because of the evil that he did in the sight of Jehovah, to provoke him to anger with the work of his hands, in being like the house of Jeroboam, and also because he smote the house of Jeroboam. And Baasha slept with his fathers and was buried in Tirzah, and Elah his son became king in his place.

3. Zimri's conspiracy against Elah and his house (8-12a)

In the twenty-sixth year of Asa king of Judah Elah the son of Baasha became king over Israel in Tirzah, and reigned two years. And his servant Zimri, commander of half his chariots, conspired against him. While he was in Tirzah drinking himself drunk in the house of Arza, the royal chamberlain in Tirzah, Zimri went in and smote and killed him, in the twenty-seventh year of Asa king of Judah, and became king in his place. But as soon as he became king and had seated himself on the throne, he smote all the house of Baasha; he left him not a single male, either of his kinsfolks or of his friends. Thus Zimri destroyed all the house of Baasha.

4. Election of Omri king (15-18)

In the twenty-seventh year of Asa king of Judah, Zimri reigned seven days in Tirzah. Now the people were besieging Gibbethon, which belonged to the Philistines. And the people who were engaged in the siege heard the report, Zimri has conspired and has also smitten the king; therefore all Israel made Omri, the commander of the army, king over Israel that day in the camp. So Omri went up from Gibbethon and all Israel with him, and they besieged Tirzah. When Zimri saw that the city was taken, he went into the castle of the royal palace, and burnt the royal palace over him. Thus he died.

5. Omri's victory over his rival (21-23)

Then the people of Israel were divided. Half of the people followed Tibni the son of Ginath and made him king, and the other half followed Omri. But the people with Omri were stronger than the people with Tibni the son of Ginath. So Tibni and his brother Joram died, and Omri became king. In the thirty-first year of Asa king of Judah Omri began to reign over Israel, and reigned twelve years; six years he reigned in Tirzah.

6. His reign (24. 27. 28)

Then he bought the hill Samaria from Shemer for two talents of silver; and he built on the hill and named the city which he built Samaria, after the name of Shemer, the owner of the hill. Now the rest of the acts of Omri, and all that he did and his mighty deeds, are they not recorded in the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel? So Omri slept with his fathers and was buried in Samaria. And Ahab his son became king in his place.

7. Ahab's marriage with Jezebel (29. 30. 31b-33a)

Now in the thirty-eighth year of Asa king of Judah Ahab the son of Omri began to reign over Israel; and Ahab the son of Omri reigned over Israel in Samaria twenty-two years. And Ahab the son of Omri did that which displeased Jehovah more than all his predecessors: he took as wife Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal king of the Sidonians, and went and served Baal and worshipped him. And he erected an altar for Baal in the temple of Baal, which he had built in Samaria. And Ahab also made the asherah.

8. Rebuilding Jericho (34)

In his days Hiel the Bethelite built Jericho. He laid its foundation with the loss of Abiram his eldest, and set up the gates with the loss of his youngest son Segub, as Jehovah had spoken by Joshua the son of Nun.

9. Ben-hadad's unreasonable demands (20[1-6])

Then Ben-hadad the king of Aram gathered all his host together, and there were thirty-two kings with him, and horses and chariots. And he went up and besieged Samaria and fought against it. And he sent messengers to Ahab king of Israel into the city and said to him, Thus says Ben-hadad, 'Your silver and your gold are mine; your wives also and your children, are mine.' And the king of Israel answered and said, As you say, my lord, O king: I am yours with all that I have. And the messengers came again and said, Thus says Ben-hadad, 'I sent to you, saying, "You shall deliver to me your silver and your gold and your wives and your children"; but to-morrow I will send my servants about this time and they shall search your house and the houses of your servants; and whatever is attractive to them, they shall take in their hands and bear it away.'

10. Ahab's refusal to comply (7-12)

Then the king of Israel called all the elders of the land and said, Mark, I pray, and see how this man is seeking to make trouble, for he sent to me for my wives and my children and for my silver and gold, and I did not refuse him. And all the elders and all the people said to him, Do not hearken nor consent! Therefore he said to the messengers of Ben-hadad, Tell my lord the king, 'All that you demanded of your servant at the first I will do, but this I cannot do.' So the messengers departed and brought him word again. Then Ben-hadad sent to him and said, Let the gods do to me what they will, if the dust of Samaria shall suffice for handfuls for all the people who follow me! And the king of Israel answered and said, Tell him, 'Let not him who is girding on his sword boast himself as he who is putting it off.' Now when Ben-hadad heard this message—he was drinking together with the kings in the pavilions—he said to his servants, Set yourselves in array. And they set themselves in array against the city.

11. His victory over the Arameans (13-21)

But just then a prophet came near to Ahab king of Israel and said, Thus saith Jehovah, 'Hast thou seen all this great multitude? Behold, I will deliver it into thy hand to-day, and thou shalt know that I am Jehovah.' And Ahab said, By whom? And he said, Thus saith Jehovah, 'By the young men under the provincial commanders.' And he said, Who shall begin the battle? And he answered, Thou.

Then he mustered the young men under the provincial commanders, and they were two hundred and thirty-two. And after them he mustered all the people, even all the Israelites—seven thousand. And at noon they made the attack, while Ben-hadad was drinking himself drunk in the pavilions, together with the thirty-two kings who had come to help him. And the young men under the provincial commanders went out first. And Ben-hadad sent out messengers and they reported to him saying, Men have come out from Samaria. And he said, Whether they have come out with peaceful intent, take them alive; or whether they have come out for war, take them alive. So these (the young men under the provincial commanders) went out of the city, and the army which followed them. And they slew each his man, so that the Arameans fled. And the Israelites pursued them, but Ben-hadad, the king of Aram, escaped on a horse with horsemen. Then the king of Israel went out and captured horses and chariots, and slew a great number of the Arameans.

12. Ben-hadad's preparations for a second campaign (22-25)

And the prophet came near to the king of Israel and said to him, Go, strengthen thyself, and mark and see what thou wilt do, for a year from now the king of Aram will come up against thee. And the servants of the king of Aram said to him, Their gods are hill-gods, therefore they were too strong for us; but let us fight against them in the plain, and surely we shall be stronger than they. And do this: take the kings away each from his place, and put commanders in their place, and assemble an army, like the army that you have lost, horse for horse and chariot for chariot; then we will fight against them in the plain, and surely we shall be stronger than they. And he listened to their advice and did so.

13. Ahab's second great victory (26-30)

Now when the year had come around Ben-hadad mustered the Arameans and went up to Aphek to fight against Israel. And the Israelites were mustered and provided with provisions, and went against them. And the Israelites encamped before them like two small flocks of goats, while the Arameans filled the country. Then a man of God came near and said to the king of Israel, Thus saith Jehovah, 'Because the Arameans think, "Jehovah is a hill-god but

not a god of the valleys," therefore I will deliver all this great multitude into thy hand, that ye may know that I am Jehovah.' So they encamped opposite each other seven days. But on the seventh day the battle was joined; and the Israelites slew of the Arameans a hundred thousand footmen in one day. But the rest fled to Aphek, into the city; and the wall fell upon twenty-seven thousand of the men who were left. Ben-hadad also fled, and came into the city, into an innermost chamber.

14. Liberal terms offered to Ben-hadad by Ahab (31-34)

And his servants said to him, Behold now, we have heard that the kings of the house of Israel are merciful kings; let us therefore put sackcloth about our loins and ropes about our heads and go out to the king of Israel; perhaps he will save your life. So they girded sackcloth about their loins and put ropes about their heads, and came to the king of Israel and said, Your servant Ben-hadad says, 'Let me live.' And he replied, Is he yet alive? He is my brother. Now the men began to divine his thought and quickly caught it up from him and said, Ben-hadad is your brother. Then he said, Go, bring him! And when Ben-hadad came out to him he took him up to himself in the chariot. And Ben-hadad said to him, The cities which my father took from your father, I will restore, and you may establish streets for yourself in Damascus as my father established in Samaria. And Ahab said, I will let you go with this agreement. So he made an agreement with him and let him go.

15. The acted prophecy and its application (35-43)

Now a certain man of the sons of the prophets at the command of Jehovah said to his fellow, Smite me, I pray. But the man refused to smite him. Then he said to him, Since you have not obeyed the voice of Jehovah, as soon as you have gone away from me, a lion shall slay you. Accordingly, as soon as he had gone away from him, a lion found him and slew him. Then he found another man, and said, Smite me, I pray. And the man smote him so as to wound him. Then the prophet departed and waited for the king by the way and disguised himself with a covering over his eyes. And as the king was passing by, he cried to the king and said, Your servant had gone out into the midst of the battle, when suddenly a man turned aside, and brought a man to me and said, 'Watch this man; if by any means he

be missing, then must your life be for his life, or else you must pay a talent of silver!' And as your servant was looking here and there, he was gone. And the king of Israel said to him, Such is your verdict: you yourself have decided it. Then he quickly took the covering away from his eyes, and the king of Israel recognized that he was one of the prophets. And he said to him, Thus saith Jehovah, 'Because thou hast let go out of thy hand the man whom I had condemned to destruction, therefore thy life shall go for his life and thy people for his people.' And the king of Israel went homeward in ill-humor and sullen, and came to Samaria.

I. **The Dynasty of Baasha.** After the death of Jeroboam the instability of the kingship in Northern Israel was speedily demonstrated. Nadab, the son of Jeroboam I, after a reign of only two years, fell a prey to a conspiracy led by Baasha. Baasha is one of the two or three men mentioned in Israelite history who came from the central tribe of Issachar. The prophetic historian has little to say about this dynasty, which was founded by bloodshed and maintained by the sword. The chief event was the war with Judah. Asa, the king of the southern realm, was so closely pressed that he appealed for help to Damascus. Thus was inaugurated that protracted series of wars between the Israelites and Arameans which drained the resources of both kingdoms and prepared the way for the later Assyrian conquests.

The history of Baasha's dynasty well illustrates the truth that "they who take the sword shall perish by the sword." Elah, his son, after a brief reign, was slain in a drunken debauch by one of his military commanders, and all the members of the royal family shared his fate.

II. **Omri's Accession.** The Hebrew army in the field forthwith proclaimed their commander, Omri, king, and marched against the capital, which was then at Tirzah, a little to the northeast of Shechem. Omri quickly overthrew the forces of the assassin; but his position on the throne of Israel was not firmly established until he had vanquished another rival, Tibni, the son of Ginath. Northern Israel was thus torn by civil war, until finally the strong hand of Omri united all the rival factions and inaugurated a new era of prosperity and strength for the greater Hebrew kingdom.

In certain respects Omri was the David of Northern Israel. Following the example of the founder of the Hebrew empire, he secured a fer-

tile hill, northwest of Shechem, named it Samaria, and made it his capital. Its strength, like that of Jerusalem, depended not upon its elevation but upon its being surrounded by deep valleys and therefore capable of easy defence. On the top of the hill was ample room for a large and strong city. The fact that the inhabitants of Samaria were later able for three years to defy successfully the highly organized army of Assyria amply confirms the wisdom of Omri's choice.

III. **Omri's Foreign Policy.** The Old Testament says nothing of Omri's military achievements; but in the famous Moabite stone, discovered in 1868 at Dibon in the territory of ancient Moab, Ahab's contemporary, Mesha, king of Moab, tells of his wars with Israel. He states in his inscription, which he set up to commemorate his victory over the Hebrews, that "Omri was king of Israel and he afflicted Moab many days because Chemosh (the god of Moab) was angry with his land. Omri took possession of the land of Medeba and he occupied it during half of his sons' days, forty years." From this contemporary evidence it is clear that Omri reasserted the rule of Israel over at least the northern part of Moab. He also was the first of Israel's rulers to pay tribute to the new power, Assyria, which, under its conquering king, Asurnaçirpal III, in 876 B.C., carried its arms into Northern Syria as far as the Mediterranean Sea. It is also significant that even in the days of Jehu, the rebel who overthrew Omri's dynasty, Northern Israel was still known to the Assyrians as "the House of Omri." Omri further established the strength of his kingdom through an alliance with Ethbaal, king of the Sidonians. By this act he opened the way for commerce between Northern Israel and the civilized peoples of the eastern Mediterranean. Thus, under the strong leadership of Omri, the northern Hebrew kingdom began to emerge from its period of anarchy and wasting warfare, and to assume a commanding position among the nations of southwestern Asia.

In the Arameans to the northeast, Omri met a foe before whom he was obliged to bow. Following in the wake of the ancient Hittites, the Arameans had come down and strongly intrenched themselves among the Lebanons, and at Damascus, on the border line between the agricultural territory of the eastern Mediterranean and the Arabian desert, they had built up a strong and prosperous capital. Damascus itself is a fertile oasis fed by the waters which break through the eastern Lebanons and which, by an elaborate system of irrigation, transform the sands of the desert into a series of fruitful gardens. To the Arameans, Omri ceded certain territory, probably east of the Jordan, and

also certain streets or quarters in his new capital, Samaria, for the use of Aramean merchants. He also probably paid heavy tribute to insure immunity from Aramean attack.

IV. **Ahab's War of Independence.** Omri laid the foundations of a strong kingdom; but to his son Ahab he left the task of shaking off the Aramean yoke. At first Ahab appears to have paid tribute and to have been ready to yield to any reasonable demand imposed by his Aramean overlords. When, however, Ben-hadad, king of Aram, demanded the privilege of pillaging without restriction Ahab's capital and palace, the Hebrew king naturally refused. Encouraged by the advice of a prophet, Ahab met the vainglorious boast of the Aramean king with active and successful resistence.

A year later another Aramean army was vanquished near Aphek, east of the sea of Chinnereth. The numbers possibly have been magnified in transmission, but many Arameans were slain and, most significant of all, Ben-hadad himself was captured. Instead of slaying his rival, Ahab set him free on condition that the captured Israelite cities should be restored and that certain streets should be set aside in Damascus for Israelite merchants and settlers, even as Omri had granted like concessions in Samaria to the Arameans.

The narrative itself suggests that Ahab's motive in giving Ben-hadad his freedom was to establish close commercial relations between the two countries. By land the Arameans commanded the trade of the east and northeast, even as the Phœnicians by sea controlled that of the Mediterranean. The records also indicate that one of Ahab's ambitions was to build up a magnificent court and kingdom like that of Solomon. To realize this ambition, close commercial relations with the surrounding nations were essential. Ben-hadad's liberation may also have been due to Ahab's recognition of the fact that both he and his rival were confronted by a common foe, Assyria, and that the only hope of escape was by uniting their forces. At least, in 854 B.C., according to the annals of Shalmaneser II, both Aram and Israel fought together against the Assyrian invader.

To the prophets of Israel, Ahab's action in freeing Ben-hadad seemed inexcusable. By means of a dramatic symbolism, which appears to have been characteristic of these early prophets, a certain unknown son of the prophets declared to the king that he had proved himself a traitor to the God of his race in setting free his heathen foe, and that for this act disaster would overtake Israel and its king.

There appears to have been much that was fanatical in the aims

and methods of these early sons of the prophets. Their fanaticism was, at the same time, their strength as well as their weakness. Their zeal for Jehovah made them a strong power in the life of the nation; but that same zeal also blinded them to the political and commercial issues of the hour.

V. **Ahab's Character and Policy.** By the majority of Ahab's contemporaries he was undoubtedly regarded as an able and successful warrior, a patriotic ruler, and a wise statesman. Northern Israel, with its broad and productive fields, could enjoy in return for its products the best that the older and higher civilizations could furnish, provided an open market could be secured for its grain and other products. Alliances with the Phœnicians and Arameans were therefore exceedingly desirable. Ahab also secured peace with the southern Hebrew kingdom by means of an alliance, sealed by the marriage of his daughter Athaliah with Ahaziah of the house of Judah. Thus, by his military skill and diplomacy in carrying out the policy instituted by his father Omri, Ahab not only threw off the Aramean yoke and established the supremacy of Northern Israel among the states of eastern Mediterranean, but also opened wide the gates of commerce which brought to his people the culture and products of the ancient Semitic world. In many ways he was the greatest king of Northern Israel.

VI. **The Dangers of Ahab's Policy.** If Israel's highest ideal had been the attainment of material splendor and strength, Ahab's policy would doubtless have passed unchallenged. There was, however, hid in the heart of the nation from the first a nobler ideal, which Ahab's policy was fast obscuring. As has been shown, that ideal was brought by the ancestors of the Hebrews from the desert and was probably first formulated by Moses. It was that Israel should give its entire loyalty to Jehovah, since he would tolerate no rival god. Solomon had ignored this fundamental tenet of Israel's faith and the division of the kingdom had been the result. In the luxurious, enervating, urban life of Northern Israel, the majority of the Hebrews had lost sight of the old desert ideal and doubtless sympathized with Ahab in accepting the inevitable consequences of a Semitic alliance, and in tolerating within the bounds of Israel the worship of the gods of the allies.

The crisis was intensified by the fact that the Tyrian queen, Jezebel, who came to Ahab's court to seal the Phœnician alliance, was not an ordinary oriental woman. Her father, Ethbaal, was a former priest of

Baal, who had mounted the Tyrian throne by assassinating the reigning king. Jezebel thus inherited unusual ability and energy, a strong religious zeal and those oriental despotic ideals which hesitated at no crime in attaining personal ends. As queen she had the right to establish at the Hebrew court a temple and priesthood for the worship of her native God, Baal Melkart. It was also easy for a woman of her ability gradually to increase the number of the priests and the splendor of the ritual at the Baal temple, until they overshadowed those of the older native sanctuaries.

To an agricultural people, the worship of Baal, the native Canaanite god of fertility, also offered many strong attractions; and its licentious rites appealed powerfully to their baser instincts. It was almost inevitable, therefore, that in such an atmosphere and under royal patronage, this kindred worship should flourish and attract many followers.

There is no evidence that Ahab contemplated abandoning the worship of Jehovah for that of Baal. The names of four of his children contain the shortened form (*Jah* or *Jo*) of the divine name Jehovah or Yahweh. To the close of his reign the king was surrounded by a group of prophetic advisers who spoke in the name of Israel's God; but with the more zealous prophets, who demanded that he banish from his realm all vestiges of the alien religion, he had no sympathy. In the light of Semitic custom, such an act would mean the severing of all alliances with their neighbors and a complete abandonment of the constructive policy which had brought peace and prosperity to Israel. The situation called for some one able clearly to define the issue and to appeal to the nation to choose between its material and spiritual ideals.

§ LXIII. ELIJAH'S WORK AS A RELIGIOUS AND SOCIAL REFORMER

1. Elijah before Ahab (I K. 17[1])

Now Elijah the Tishbite of Tishbe in Gilead, said to Ahab, As Jehovah, the God of Israel, liveth, whom I serve, there shall be neither dew nor rain these years, except according to my word. . . .

2. By the Brook Cherith ([2-5])

Then the word of Jehovah came to him, saying, Depart from here and turn eastward and hide thyself by the Brook Cherith, that is east of Jordan. Then thou shalt drink out of the brook; and I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there. So he went and obeyed the command of Je-

hovah and dwelt by the Brook Cherith that is east of Jordan. And the ravens brought him bread every morning and flesh every evening, and he used to drink out of the brook. But after a while the brook dried up, because there was no rain in the land.

3. Miraculous provision of food at Zarephath (8-16)

Then the word of Jehovah came to him, saying, Arise, go to Zarephath, which belongs to Sidon, and dwell there. Behold, I have commanded a widow there to provide for thee. So he arose and went to Zarephath. And when he came to the gate of the city a widow was there gathering sticks; and calling to her, he said, Bring me, I pray, a little water in a vessel, that I may drink. And as she was going to bring it, he called after her, Bring also, I pray, a bit of bread with you. And she replied, As Jehovah your God liveth, I have nothing but a handful of meal in the jar and a little oil in the cruse; and now I am gathering a few sticks, that I may go in and prepare it for myself and my son, that we may eat it and then die. But Elijah said to her, Fear not; go and do as you have said, but first make me from it a little cake, and then make for yourself and your son. For thus saith Jehovah, the God of Israel, 'The jar of meal shall not be used up, neither shall the cruse of oil become empty, until the day that Jehovah sendeth rain upon the earth.' And she went and did as Elijah directed. So she and he and her household had food to eat. From that day the jar of meal was not used up, neither did the cruse of oil become empty, just as Jehovah had said by Elijah.

4. Restoring the son of the widow (17-24)

Now after this the son of the mistress of the house fell sick; and his sickness was so severe that there was no breath left in him. Then she said to Elijah, What have I to do with you, O man of God? You have come to me to remind me of my sin by slaying my son! And he said to her, Give me your son. And he took him out of her bosom and carried him up into the upper chamber, where he was staying, and laid him upon his own bed. And he cried to Jehovah, and said, O Jehovah, my God, hast thou also brought evil upon this widow, whose guest I am, by slaying her son? And he stretched himself upon the child three times, and cried to Jehovah and said, O Jehovah, my God, I pray thee, let this child's life come back to him again. And Jehovah

hearkened to the voice of Elijah; and the life of the child came back to him again, so that he revived. Then Elijah took the child and brought him down from the upper chamber into the house and gave him to his mother. And Elijah said, See, your son lives! And the woman said to Elijah, Now I know that you are a man of God, and that the word of Jehovah in your mouth is truth.

5. Elijah's demand (18[1, 2a])

Now a long time after this the word of Jehovah came to Elijah, in the third year, saying, Go, show thyself to Ahab; and I will send rain upon the earth. So Elijah went to show himself to Ahab.

6. Severity of the famine (2[b-6])

And the famine was severe in Samaria. And Ahab had called Obadiah, the prefect of the palace. Now Obadiah revered Jehovah greatly; for when Jezebel tried to exterminate the prophets of Jehovah, Obadiah took a hundred prophets, and hid them by fifty in a cave and fed them continually with bread and water. And Ahab had said to Obadiah, Up! let us go through the land to all the springs of water and to all the brooks; perhaps we may find grass so that we can save the horses and mules alive and not lose all the beasts. So they divided the land between them to pass through it: Ahab went in one direction by himself and Obadiah went in another direction by himself,

7. Elijah's interview with Obadiah (7-15)

And while Obadiah was on the way, Elijah met him suddenly. When he knew him, he fell on his face and said, Is it you, my lord Elijah? And he answered him, It is I; go, tell your lord, 'Elijah is here.' And he said, Wherein have I sinned, that you would deliver your servant into the hand of Ahab, to slay me? As Jehovah your God liveth, there is no nation or kingdom, whither my lord has not sent to seek you; and when they said 'He is not here,' he took an oath of the kingdom and nation, that no one had found you. And now you say, 'Go, tell your lord, "Elijah is here."' And as soon as I am gone from you the spirit of Jehovah will carry you to a place unknown to me, and so when I come and tell Ahab, and he cannot find you, he will put me to death, although I, your servant, have feared Jehovah from my youth. Was it not told my lord what I did when Jezebel slew the prophets of Jehovah, how I hid a hundred of Jehovah's prophets by fifty in a cave and fed them continu-

ally with bread and water? And now you say, 'Go, tell your lord, Elijah is here,' that he may put me to death! But Elijah said, As Jehovah of hosts liveth, before whom I stand, I will surely show myself to him to-day.

8. His command to Ahab (16-19)

So Obadiah went to meet Ahab, and told him, and Ahab went to meet Elijah. And as soon as Ahab saw Elijah, Ahab said to him, Is it you, you who have brought misfortune to Israel? And he answered, I have not brought misfortune to Israel, but you and your father's house, in that you have forsaken the commands of Jehovah and have run after the Baals. Now therefore send and gather to me all Israel to Mount Carmel, together with the four hundred and fifty prophets of the Baal and the four hundred prophets of the asherah, who eat at Jezebel's table.

9. Elijah's address to the people (20-24)

So Ahab sent to all the Israelites and gathered the prophets together to Mount Carmel. Then Elijah came near to all the people and said, How long are you going to limp between the two sides? If Jehovah be God, follow him, but if the Baal, then follow him. But the people gave him no answer. Then Elijah said to the people, I, even I only, am left as a prophet of Jehovah, but the Baal's prophets are four hundred and fifty men. Let them therefore give us two bullocks, and let them choose one bullock for themselves and cut it in pieces and lay it on the wood without putting on any fire, and I will dress the other bullock and lay it on wood without putting on any fire. Then you call on your god and I will call on Jehovah; and the God who answers by fire, he is the God. And all the people answered and said, It is well spoken.

10. Failure of the Baal prophets to meet the test (25-29)

And Elijah said to the prophets of the Baal, Choose one of the bullocks for yourselves and dress it first, for you are many, and call on your god, without putting on any fire. So they took the bullock which he gave them and dressed it, and called on the Baal from morning even until noon, saying, O Baal, hear us. But there was no voice nor answer. And they limped about the altar which they had erected. But when it was noon, Elijah mocked them, saying, Cry aloud; for he is a god; either he is musing, or he has gone aside, or he is on a journey, or perhaps he is sleeping and must be awakened! Then they cried aloud, and cut themselves

after their manner with swords and lances until the blood gushed out upon them. And when midday was past, they prophesied until the time of the offering of the evening oblation; but there was neither voice nor answer nor heed paid to their cry.

11. Elijah's preparations for the test (30. 32b-35)

Then Elijah said to all the people, Come near to me. And all the people came near to him. And he repaired the altar of Jehovah which had been thrown down. Then he made a trench about the altar of about the capacity of one and one-fourth bushels of seed. And he laid the pieces of wood in order, cut up the bullock, and laid it on pieces of the wood. And he said, Fill four jars with water and pour it on the burnt-offering and on the pieces of wood. And he said, Do it the second time; and they did it the second time. And he said, Do it the third time; and they did it also the third time, so that the water ran round the altar; and he also filled the trench with water.

12. The sign from heaven confirming Elijah's words (36-40)

But when it was time to offer the evening oblation, Elijah the prophet came near and said, O Jehovah, God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy command. Hear me, O Jehovah, hear me, that this people may know that thou, Jehovah, art God, and that thou hast turned their heart back again. Then the fire of Jehovah fell and consumed the burnt-offering and the wood, the stones and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench. And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces, and cried, Jehovah, he is God; Jehovah, he is God. But Elijah commanded them, Take the prophets of the Baal; let not one of them escape! So they took them down to the Brook Kishon and slew them there.

13. Coming of the rain (41-46)

Then Elijah said to Ahab, Go up, eat and drink; for there is the sound of a heavy downpour of rain. So Ahab went up to eat and drink. But Elijah went up to the top of Carmel, and crouched down upon the earth, with his face between his knees. And he said to his servant, Go up now, look toward the sea. And he went up, and looked and said, There is nothing. And he said, Now go again seven times. So the servant went back seven times. But the

seventh time he said, There is a cloud arising out of the sea as small as a man's hand. And he said, Go up, say to Ahab, 'Make ready your chariot, go down, that the rain may not stop you.' Then in a little while the heavens grew black with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain. And Ahab rode toward Jezreel. And the hand of Jehovah was on Elijah, so that he girded up his loins and ran before Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel.

14. Elijah's flight to Horeb (19^{1-9a})

Now when Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, and all the details of his slaying the prophets with the sword, Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah, saying, As surely as you are Elijah and I am Jezebel, may the gods do to me what they will, if I do not make your life as the life of one of them by to-morrow about this time. Then he was afraid and arose and went for his life. And he came to Beersheba, which belongs to Judah; and there he left his servant. But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a broom tree, and he asked that he might die, saying, It is enough; now, O Jehovah, take my life, for I am not better than my fathers! Then he lay down and slept under the broom tree. Thereupon a divine messenger touched him and said to him, Rise, eat! And when he looked, he saw there at his head a cake, baked on hot stones, and a jar of water. And he ate and drank and lay down again. But the messenger of Jehovah came again the second time and touched him and said, Rise, eat, or else the journey will be too long for you. So he arose and ate and drank and went in the strength of that food forty days and forty nights to Horeb the Mount of God. And there he came to a cave and lodged therein.

15. His complaint (9b-11a)

Thereupon the word of Jehovah came to him. And he said to him, What doest thou here, Elijah? And he said, I have been very jealous for Jehovah, the God of hosts; for the Israelites have forsaken thee, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I only am left, and they seek to take my life from me.

16. Revelation of Jehovah's true character (11b-14)

Then he said, Go forth and stand on the mount before Jehovah.

Thereupon Jehovah passed by, and a great and violent wind rent the mountain and broke in pieces the rocks before Jehovah; but Jehovah was not in the wind. And

after the wind an earthquake; but Jehovah was not in the earthquake. And after the earthquake a fire; but Jehovah was not in the fire. And after the fire the sound of a low, soft whisper. And as soon as Elijah heard it, he wrapped his face in his mantle and went out and stood at the entrance of the cave. And then there came a voice to him and said, What doest thou here, Elijah? And he said, I have been very jealous for Jehovah, the God of hosts, for the Israelites have forsaken thee, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword, and I only am left, and they seek to take away my life from me.

17. Directions for the overthrow of Baalism (15-18)

Then Jehovah said to him, Go, return on thy way to the Wilderness of Damascus, and when thou comest anoint Hazael to be king over Aram. And Jehu the son of Nimshi shalt thou anoint to be king over Israel. And Elisha the son of Shaphat of Abel-meholah shalt thou anoint to be prophet in thy place. And it shall be that whoever escapes the sword of Hazael, Jehu shall slay; and whoever escapes the sword of Jehu, Elisha shall slay. Yet will I spare seven thousand in Israel—all the knees which have not bowed to Baal and every mouth which hath not kissed him.

18. Selection of a disciple and successor (19-21)

Now when he had departed from there he found Elisha the son of Shaphat, as he was plowing with twelve yoke of oxen, and he was with the twelfth. And Elijah went over to him and cast his mantle upon him. And he left the oxen and ran after Elijah and said, Let me, I pray you, kiss my father and my mother and then I will follow you. And he said to him, Go back again, for what have I done to you? So he turned from following him and took the yoke of oxen and slew them and boiled their flesh with the implements of the oxen and gave to the people to eat. Then he arose and went after Elijah and entered into his service.

19. Naboth's refusal to sell his vineyard to Ahab (21 1-4)

Now Naboth the Jezreelite had a vineyard beside the palace of Ahab king of Samaria. And Ahab spoke to Naboth, saying, Give me your vineyard, that I may have it for a vegetable garden, because it is near my house, and I will give you a better vineyard for it; or, if it is more satisfactory to you, I will give you the value of it in money. But Naboth answered Ahab, Jehovah forbid me, that I should give to

you the inheritance of my fathers. And Ahab came into his house in ill-humor because of the word which Naboth the Jezreelite had spoken to him; for he had said, I will not give to you the inheritance of my fathers. And he lay down on his bed and covered his face and would eat no food.

20. Jezebel's measures to secure Naboth's death (5-10)

But Jezebel his wife came to him and said to him, Why are you so out of humor that you eat no food? And he replied to her, Because I made a proposition to Naboth the Jezreelite and said to him, 'Give me your vineyard for money; or else if it is more satisfactory to you I will give you another vineyard for it'; and he answered, 'I will not give you my vineyard.' Then Jezebel his wife said to him, Is it you who now holds sway in Israel? Arise, eat, and let your heart be cheerful. I will give you the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite. So she wrote letters in Ahab's name and sealed them with his seal, and sent the letters to the elders and to the nobles who were in his city, who presided with Naboth. And she wrote in the letters, Proclaim a fast and also place Naboth in a prominent place among the people. Then place two base men before him and let them bear witness against him, saying, 'You have cursed God and the king.' And then carry him out and stone him to death.

21. Realization of her designs (11-16)

And the men of his city, the elders and the nobles who presided in his city, did as Jezebel had ordered them. As was commanded in the letters which she had sent to them, they proclaimed a fast, and put Naboth in a prominent place among the people. And two base men came in and sat before him, and the scoundrels bore witness against him (Naboth) in the presence of the people, saying, Naboth cursed God and the king. Then they carried him out of the city and stoned him to death with stones. And they sent to Jezebel, saying, Naboth has been stoned and is dead. And as soon as Jezebel heard that Naboth had been stoned and was dead, Jezebel said to Ahab, Arise, take possession of the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, which he refused to give you for money; for Naboth is not alive but dead. And as soon as Ahab heard that Naboth was dead, Ahab rose up to go down to the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, to take possession of it.

But the word of Jehovah came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying, Arise, go down to meet Ahab the king of Israel, who dwells in Samaria; he is just now in the vineyard of Naboth, whither he has gone down to take possession of it. And thou shalt speak to him, saying, 'Thus saith Jehovah, "Hast thou killed and also taken possession?" ' Moreover thou shalt speak to him, saying, 'Thus saith Jehovah, "In the place where the dogs licked the blood of Naboth will the dogs lick thy blood also." ' And Ahab said to Elijah, Have you found me, O mine enemy? And he answered, I have. And of Jezebel also Jehovah hath spoken, saying, 'The dogs shall eat Jezebel in the district of Jezreel.' Now when Ahab heard those words he tore his clothes and put sackcloth on his flesh and fasted; he also slept on sackcloth and went about quietly.

22. Ahab's guilt (17-20a. 23. 27)

I. **The Elijah Stories.** The account of Ahab's wars contains no references to the prophet Elijah. In the extracts from what appears to have been a detailed account of the events of Ahab's reign, the king is pictured as a brave and benign ruler. The condemnation of his policy in sparing the life of the Aramean king, Ben-hadad, suggests the attitude of the prophetic party. The activity and point of view of Elijah, the great commanding figure of the period, are recorded in the chapters seventeen, eighteen, nineteen and twenty-one of I Kings. In the Greek version of the Old Testament these chapters follow each other without a break. It is evident that they were taken from the same source. That source was evidently an account of the work of Elijah which was current among the prophets of a later day. The abruptness with which Elijah is introduced indicates that the original Elijah history is here quoted only in part.

The interest in this Elijah history is religious rather than political and fixes attention on the activity of the prophet rather than of the king. Its point of view is fundamentally different, but its testimony is not contradictory, but rather supplementary, to that of the Ahab history. It reveals the deeper problems and forces in Israel's life. The prominence of miracles and the exaltation of the authority of the prophet far above that of the king reveal the influence of transmission on the lips of the people or of the later prophets. The stories represent tradition's remembrance and interpretation of the real character and work of Elijah. To gain a true conception of the actual course of history, it is therefore

necessary to make allowance for this traditional element. At the same time there is a freshness and a wealth of detail in each of the narratives which indicate that they come from a period not far removed from the events which they record. As there is in them no condemnation of the high places of Israel and of the rites connected with them, it would seem that these Elijah stories were committed to writing some time before the middle of the eighth century; for at that time Amos, Hosea and Isaiah began to attack these popular institutions.

II. **Elijah, the Tishbite.** The situation in the days of Ahab required a man of clear vision and of fearless, heroic character to stem the popular tide and to lead the nation back to its simpler and older ideals. Almost unconsciously the king and the people were yielding to the allurements of the agricultural and commercial civilization which they had received from the ancient Canaanites and the neighboring Phœnicians. It was natural that Moses's successor should come from Gilead, which was the borderland between the desert of Israel's earlier days and their settled home in Palestine. Elijah's costume, the rough shepherd's mantle and staff, his food, and the freedom with which he moves from place to place, all proclaim his wilderness origin. His flight to Horeb in the hour of his great discouragement also indicates that he felt himself to be the champion of the God of Moses and of Israel's earlier faith. In common with the Rechabites and Nazirites, the representatives of the old nomadic religion, he viewed askance the agricultural civilization of Canaan, with its debasing religious institutions and its gross immorality. By Ahab and the members of his court this prophet of the desert was doubtless regarded as a rude fanatic. The king's words on meeting Elijah reveal the inevitable hostility which existed between these two strong men.

III. **Elijah's Demand of Loyalty to Jehovah.** From his desert point of view Elijah could see no justification of Ahab's policy in tolerating within the land of Israel the worship of an alien god. His reasoning was simple and incontrovertible: Israel was Jehovah's people, and Jehovah from the first had demanded their entire loyalty. To share that loyalty with another god was treason on the part of both king and people. Doubtless the prophet was also fully aware of the unspeakably corrupting moral influences of the Baal religion.

On the other hand, in the light of conditions in Northern Israel, it is easy to understand why Ahab refused to listen to the prophet. To have acceded to Elijah's demands it would have been necessary for the king to reverse completely his most cherished policies. It would

have meant not only severing foreign alliances, but also throwing off the powerful influence of his own queen Jezebel. Hence the close-drawn issue between king and prophet, and the necessity of Elijah's public appeal to the conscience of the people.

The Greek historians record a famine during the reign of Ittobaal of Tyre which affected Phœnicia as well as Israel; but according to them it lasted but one year. By Phœnicians, as well as Israelites, a calamity of this character was regarded as certain evidence of divine disfavor. It therefore prepared the minds of the people in a most effective manner for the prophet's message.

IV. **Elijah's Appeal to the Nation.** According to the prophetic tradition, Elijah's appeal to the people was made at a great national assembly, the background and primary occasion of which was a severe and protracted drought. The scene of the assembly was the ancient sanctuary on the eastern heights of Mount Carmel, which projects into the heart of Northern Israel and was easily accessible from all parts of the kingdom. Here, not far from Ahab's capital, but upon the heights, removed from the Canaanite shrines and civilization, the representatives of the nation assembled to ask divine favor and deliverance. Later tradition has preserved the memory of a lightning flash and the downpour of rain, which were interpreted as divine confirmation of the prophet's authority; but it has also recorded that which was most significant in the dramatic scene on Mount Carmel—the prophet's bold demand that the people choose once and forever between Jehovah and Baal.

As at all times in their history, however, the people were slow to choose and slower to act. Elijah, like the earlier prophets, appears to have taken the initiative, and, in his consuming zeal, to have given command to slay the hated prophets of Baal. For the moment he seemed victorious and in his enthusiasm ran before Ahab's chariot across the plain to the entrance of Jezreel.

V. **The Revelation at Horeb.** Unlike most oriental women, Jezebel was daunted neither by fear nor public opinion. It soon became evident that she was still in control of Ahab and of the capital. Like every enthusiast, Elijah was probably subject to great revulsions of feeling. In his despondency Jezebel's message to the prophet apparently drove him forth a fugitive, discouraged and in terror. Nomad that he was, he naturally fled along the great highway southward to the sacred sanctuary at Beersheba, and then on alone, a pilgrim to the sacred mountain of Jehovah, the scene, according to the early Hebrew stories, of the revelation to Moses and the nation.

Again popular tradition suggests with wonderful beauty and delicacy the significant facts in Elijah's experience at this critical period of his life. Man of iron—he had trusted to the public appeal and to the sword to win his people to Jehovah. In the solitude he learned at last that God reveals himself not alone and in highest measure in the tempest and earthquake and flaming fire, but in the low, soft whisper in the heart of man. Although, in the effort to make the narratives clear and dramatic, prophetic tradition long continued to represent God as speaking by audible words to his servants, yet in the ultimate analysis it was always in the heart of the individual prophet that the truths were appreciated which he later proclaimed as the message of God to his race.

VI. **The Call of Elisha.** Confronted by Jezebel and the diplomacy of the court, Elijah painfully realized his limitations. Reared in the wilderness, he was a stranger to the life of the city. It was probably because he appreciated these limitations and because he was baffled by his new environment that he fled in terror and discouragement back to the desert. In proclaiming to the people the fatal dangers inherent in the policy of Ahab and in showing them the fatal danger in tolerating Baal worship in their midst, he had accomplished his real life work. Some one intimately acquainted with the complex civilization of Northern Israel and in close touch with king and people, was also needed to instil into the popular consciousness the truth proclaimed by Elijah and, in time, to arouse the nation to shake off the pernicious influence of Baalism. Such a man was found in Elisha, the son of a prosperous farmer of central Israel. Elisha's immediate response to the call of Elijah revealed his sympathy with the point of view of the great prophet and his readiness and fitness to take up his work.

Even in the flickering light of popular tradition, the character and methods of these two prophets are clearly revealed and they stand in striking contrast to each other. The one was the prophet of thunder and the sword; the other was the popular counsellor and diplomat, who attained his ends by persuasion and organization. Elisha's field of activity was in court and camp. By virtue of his intimate knowledge of men and forces in Israel and his close touch with leaders and people, he saw fruits, where Elijah was only able to sow the seed.

VII. **Elijah's Condemnation of Ahab's Tyranny.** On one other important occasion the flashlight of popular tradition reveals the work of Elijah. This time, like Amos and Micah, he figures as the champion of the oppressed, and voices the deep resentment with which the free, democratic Israelites viewed the encroachments of unscrupulous abso-

lutism. Jezebel had brought to Ahab's court not only the Baal cults but also the prevailing oriental idea of the relation between a king and his subjects. Ahab himself was an energetic organizer and builder. In extending his palace grounds, he desired to secure the vineyard of a certain Naboth that he might convert it into a vegetable garden. Naboth, however, refused to part with the land, preferring to maintain his ancestral right of inheritance even in the face of the king's wishes. Ahab recognized that Naboth's position was impregnable according to the accepted laws and traditions of Israel. Jezebel, however, trained in a very different court, tempted her husband to disregard the most sacred rights of his people and by injustice and murder to secure possession of the coveted vineyard.

Doubtless Ahab's act in yielding to the temptation was quickly known throughout the land of Israel, for such an act endangered the liberties of all his subjects. It was, therefore, a critical and dramatic moment in Israel's history, when one of his subjects, Elijah, the Tishbite, dared to stand up before Ahab, as the king was about to take possession of the vineyard of Naboth, to denounce the royal culprit and to proclaim in the name of Jehovah the inevitable consequences of this bloody crime.

VIII. **The Significance of Elijah's Work.** In later literature and thought, Elijah stands as the classic example of a brave, effective herald of reform. In times of moral and religious degeneracy, later Judaism looked for his return or for the appearance of one who in his spirit would denounce all forms of apostasy and injustice, even though these were intrenched under the shadow of a throne or of a sanctuary.

Elijah's conception of Jehovah, however, appears to have been the same as that of Moses and the earlier leaders of his race. They were quite willing that Baal should be worshipped in Phœnicia; but in Jehovah's land there was no place for a heathen god. His recognition of the Arameans as agents in accomplishing Jehovah's purpose also suggests that broadening conception of the sphere of Jehovah's influence, which became an accepted fact in the thought of Amos and Hosea.

Elijah's great work, however, appears to have been done not as a theologian but as a reformer, who stayed the encroachments of Baalism and championed the rights of the people against the fatal tyranny of their king. He was, therefore, the forerunner of the great social reformers of succeeding generations, who defined religion not merely in terms of belief and ritual but also in terms of justice and mercy. While he himself did not see the popular acceptance of the principles which he

proclaimed, Elijah was the great informing spirit of his age, inspiring the activity of his disciple Elisha and preparing the way for the epoch-making prophets of the Assyrian period.

§ LXIV. THE DECLINE OF THE HOUSE OF AHAB

1. The alliance against Aram (I K. 22 1-4)

Then for three years they remained at peace, without there being war between Aram and Israel. But in the third year, when Jehoshaphat the king of Judah had come down to the king of Israel, the king of Israel said to his servants, Do you know that Ramoth in Gilead belongs to us, yet we sit still instead of taking it from the king of Aram? And he said to Jehoshaphat, Will you go with me to fight against Ramoth in Gilead? And Jehoshaphat said to the king of Israel, I am as you, my people as your people, my horses as your horses.

2. Encouraging message of the official prophets (5-8)

Jehoshaphat also said to the king of Israel, Inquire at this time, I pray, for the word of Jehovah. Then the king of Israel gathered the prophets together, about four hundred men, and asked them, Shall I go to fight against Ramoth in Gilead or shall I forbear? And they said, Go up; for Jehovah will deliver it into the hand of the king. But Jehoshaphat said, Is there no other prophet of Jehovah, that we may inquire of him? And the king of Israel said, There is another by whom we may inquire of Jehovah, Micaiah the son of Imlah, but I hate him; for he prophesies for me nothing good, but only evil. And Jehoshaphat said, Let not the king say so.

3. Their predictions of victory (9-12)

Then the king of Israel called an eunuch and said, Bring quickly Micaiah the son of Imlah. Now while the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat the king of Judah were sitting each on his throne, clad in his robes of state at the entrance of the gate of Samaria, and all the prophets were prophesying before them, Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah made for himself horns of iron and said, Thus saith Jehovah, 'With these shalt thou push the Arameans until thou hast destroyed them!' And all the prophets prophesied the same saying, Go up to Ramoth in Gilead; for Jehovah will deliver it into the hand of the king.

4. Micaiah's prediction of defeat (13-17)

And the messenger who went to call Micaiah said to him, See, now the prophets have with one consent promised good fortune for the king; therefore speak the same as they all do and prophesy good fortune. But Micaiah said, As Jehovah liveth, I will speak what Jehovah saith to me. And when he came to the king, the king said to him, Micaiah, shall we go to Ramoth in Gilead to fight or shall we forbear? And he answered him, Go up and prosper; and Jehovah will deliver it into the hand of the king! But the king said to him, How many times shall I adjure you that you speak to me nothing but the truth in the name of Jehovah? And he said, I saw all Israel scattered upon the mountains, as sheep that have no shepherd. And Jehovah said, 'These have no master; let each of them go home in peace!'

5. The lying spirit within the official prophets (18-23)

And the king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, Did I not tell you that he would prophesy no good concerning me, but evil? And Micaiah said, Therefore hear the word of Jehovah: I saw Jehovah sitting on his throne and all the host of heaven standing by him on his right hand and on his left. And Jehovah said, 'Who shall delude Ahab so that he will go up and fall at Ramoth in Gilead?' And one proposed one thing and another another, until there came forth a spirit and stood before Jehovah and said, 'I will delude him.' And Jehovah said to him, 'By what means?' And he said, 'I will go forth and become a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets.' Thereupon he said, 'Thou shalt delude him and shalt succeed also! Go forth and do so.' So behold, Jehovah hath now put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these your prophets, since Jehovah hath determined to bring evil upon you.

6. Micaiah's imprisonment (24-28)

Then Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah came near and struck Micaiah on the cheek and said, Which way did the spirit of Jehovah go from me to speak to you? And Micaiah said, Indeed, you shall see on that day, when you shall go from one chamber to another to hide yourself. Then the king of Israel said, Take Micaiah and carry him back to Amon the governor of the city and to Joash the king's son, and say, 'Thus the king commands, "Put this fellow in prison and feed him with a scanty fare of bread and water

until I return in peace." ' And Micaiah said, If you indeed return in peace, Jehovah hath not spoken by me.

7. Ahab's disguise (29-33)

Then the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat the king of Judah went up to Ramoth in Gilead. And the king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, I will disguise myself and go into the battle, but you can put on your robes. So the king of Israel disguised himself and went into the battle. Now the king of Aram had given orders to the thirty-two commanders of his chariots, saying, Fight with neither small nor great, except only with the king of Israel. Accordingly when the commanders of the chariots saw Jehoshaphat, they said, Surely, it is the king of Israel, and they surrounded him to fight against him, but Jehoshaphat cried out. Therefore, as soon as the commanders of the chariots saw that it was not the king of Israel, they turned back from pursuing him.

8. His fatal wound (34-38)

But a certain man drew at a venture and smote the king of Israel between the attachments and the coat of mail. Therefore he said to the driver of his chariot, Turn about and carry me out of the army; for I am severely wounded. And the battle increased that day, and the king was propped up in his chariot against the Arameans until evening, and the blood ran out of the wound into the bottom of the chariot. But at evening he died. And toward sunset the cry went throughout the army, Each to his city and each to his land, for the king is dead! So they came to Samaria and buried the king in Samaria. And when they washed the chariot by the pool of Samaria, the dogs licked up his blood, and the harlots washed themselves in it, just as Jehovah had declared.

9. *Résumé* of his reign (39, 40)

Now the other acts of Ahab, and all that he did and the ivory house which he built and all the cities that he built, are they not recorded in the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel? So Ahab slept with his fathers and Ahaziah his son became king in his place.

10. Ahaziah's policy (51, 53)

Ahaziah the son of Ahab became king over Israel in Samaria in the seventeenth year of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, and he reigned two years over Israel. And he served Baal and worshipped him, and provoked to anger Jehovah, the God of Israel, just as his father had done.

11. Ahaziah's embassy to Ekron (II K. 1 2-4)

Now Ahaziah fell out through the lattice in his upper apartment in Samaria, and lay sick. Then he sent messengers and commanded them, Go, inquire of Baal-Zebub, the god of Ekron, whether or not I shall recover of this sickness. But the messenger of Jehovah said to Elijah the Tishbite, Arise, go up to meet the messengers of the king of Samaria and say to them, 'Is it because there is no God in Israel, that ye go to inquire of Baal-Zebub, the god of Ekron?' Now therefore thus saith Jehovah, 'Thou shalt not come down from the bed whither thou hast gone up, but thou shalt surely die.' Then Elijah went away.

12. Report of the embassy (5-8)

And when the messengers came back to him, he said to them, Why have you returned? And they said to him, A man came up to meet us and said to us, 'Go back again to the king who sent you and say to him, "Thus saith Jehovah: Is it because there is no God in Israel that thou sendest to inquire of Baal-Zebub the god of Ekron? Therefore thou shalt not come down from the bed whither thou hast gone up, but shalt surely die." ' And he said to them, What kind of man was he who told you these things? And they answered him, A man clad in a skin and girt with a leather girdle about his loins. Then he said, It is Elijah the Tishbite!

13. Jehoram's policy (3 1. 2)

So Ahaziah died according to the word of Jehovah which Elijah had spoken. And Jehoram the son of Ahab became king over Israel in Samaria in the eighteenth year of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, and he reigned twelve years. And he displeased Jehovah, but not as did his father and mother, for he put away the pillar of Baal that his father had made.

14. Mesha's rebellion (4. 5)

Now Mesha king of Moab was a sheepmaster; and he rendered regularly to the king of Israel a tribute of a hundred thousand lambs and the wool of a hundred thousand rams. But after Ahab died, the king of Moab rebelled against the king of Israel.

15. Perplexity of the invading kings (6-12)

And King Jehoram went out of Samaria at that time and mustered all Israel. Then he proceeded at once to send to Jehoshaphat the king of Judah, saying, The king of Moab has rebelled against me; will you go with me to fight against Moab? And he replied, I will come up; I am as you, my people as your people, my horses as your horses. And he inquired, Which way shall we go up? And he answered,

By the way of the Wilderness of Edom. So the king of Israel went with the king of Judah and the king of Edom. And when they made a circuit of seven days' journey, the army and the beasts that followed them had no water. And the king of Israel said, Alas! for Jehovah hath called these three kings together to deliver them into the hand of Moab! But Jehoshaphat said, Is there no prophet of Jehovah here that through him we may inquire of Jehovah? And one of the king of Israel's servants answered and said, Elisha the son of Shaphat is here, who poured water on the hands of Elijah. And Jehoshaphat said, The word of Jehovah is with him. So the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat and the king of Edom went down to him.

16. Elisha's prediction and its realization (13-20)

And Elisha said to the king of Israel, What have I to do with you? Go to the prophets of your father and to the prophets of your mother! But the king of Israel said to him. No; for Jehovah hath called these three kings together to deliver them into the hand of Moab. And Elisha said, As surely as Jehovah of hosts liveth, whose servant I am, were it not that I have regard for the presence of Jehoshaphat the king of Judah, I would pay no attention to you. But now bring me a minstrel. And whenever the minstrel played, the power of Jehovah came upon him. And he said, Thus saith Jehovah, 'I will make this torrent-bed full of cisterns.' For thus saith Jehovah, 'Ye shall not see wind neither shall ye see rain; yet this torrent-bed shall be filled with water, so that ye yourselves together with your army and your beasts shall drink. But since this is only a slight thing in the sight of Jehovah, he also will deliver the Moabites into your hand. And ye shall smite every fortified city and fell all the good trees and stop up all the springs of water and destroy with stones all the good cultivated land.' Accordingly in the morning, about the time when the offering is presented, water came suddenly from the direction of Edom, so that the country was filled with water.

17. The victory over the Moabites (21-25)

Now when all the Moabites had heard that the kings had come up to fight against them, they gathered together all who were able to bear arms and upward, and stood on the border. But in the morning early, when the sun had risen

on the water, the Moabites saw the water opposite them as red as blood. And they said, This is blood! The kings have surely fought together and they have smitten one another. Now therefore, Moab, to the spoil! And when they came to the camp of Israel, the Israelites rose up and smote the Moabites, so that they fled before them; and they went forward smiting the Moabites as they went. And they kept on destroying the cities; on all the good cultivated land they cast each his stone, until they filled it; all the springs of water they stopped up, and felled all the good trees, and they harried Moab until her sons were left in Kir-hareseth, and the slingers surrounded and smote it.

18. Desperate straits of the king of Moab (26. 27)

But when the king of Moab saw that the battle was too fierce for him, he took with him seven hundred men, armed with swords, to break through against the king of Edom, but they could not. Then he took his eldest son, who was to reign in his place, and offered him for a burnt-offering upon the wall. And great wrath came against Israel, so that they departed from him and returned to their own land.

I. The Advance of Assyria. Henceforth Assyria becomes more and more the determining factor in the politics of southwestern Asia. The contemporary Assyrian and Moabite inscriptions indicate that the biblical extracts from the personal memoirs of Ahab, Elijah and Jehu give only a fragmentary picture of the real course of Northern Israel's history. The great Assyrian conqueror, Shalmaneser II, records in his annals a campaign in the year 854 B.C. into central and southern Syria. At Karkar on the River Orontes, twenty miles north of Hamath, he was confronted by the allied armies of Syria. His detailed account sheds contemporary light upon conditions along the Mediterranean seaboard: "1,200 chariots, 1,200 horsemen, 20,000 men of Dad'idri (Hadadezer, Ben-hadad II), of Damascus; 700 chariots, 700 horsemen, 10,000 soldiers of Irhulini of Hamath; 2,000 chariots, 10,000 soldiers of Ahab of Israel; 500 soldiers of Guai; 10,000 soldiers of the land of Muçri; 10 chariots, 10,000 soldiers of the land of Irkanat; 200 soldiers of Matinu-baal (Mattan-baal) of Arvad; 200 soldiers of the land of Usanata; 30 chariots, 10,000 soldiers of Adnu-bali (Adoni-baal) of Shiana; 1,000 camels of Gindibu of Arba; . . . 1,000 soldiers of the Ammonite, Basa son of Ruhubi (Rehob); these twelve kings he (*i.e.*, Irkanat) took to help him; for battle and combat they advanced against

me. With the exalted succor, which Asshur, the lord, rendered, with the mighty power, which Nergal, who marched before me, bestowed, I fought with them. From Karkar to Gilzan I effected their defeat; 14,000 of their troops with weapons I slew; like Adar (the storm-god) I rained down a flood upon them; I scattered their corpses; the surface of the wilderness I filled with their many troops; with weapons I caused their blood to flow. . . . I took possession of the River Orontes. In the midst of that battle I captured their chariots, their horsemen and their teams."

It appears from this record that Ben-hadad of Damascus furnished the greater number of fighting men, although Ahab, perhaps as a result of his previous victories over the Arameans, was able to send a larger number of chariots. While the Assyrian king claimed that he won a sweeping victory, the result was by no means decisive. Hamath in the north met the chief brunt of the Assyrian attack, and Damascus seems for the time to have escaped invasion.

The inscription is especially significant, for it contains the earliest reference in Assyrian annals to an Israelite king. For the first time, also, the Hebrew warriors met face to face the Assyrian foes who were destined for over two centuries to determine the course of Israel's history.

II. **Micaiah and the Four Hundred False Prophets.** As soon as the Assyrian invader retired, the old feud between Damascus and Northern Israel was revived. The contest was now for the possession of the city of Ramoth in Gilead, east of the Jordan, which was the natural eastern outpost of Israel and commanded the important highway of trade from Damascus to the port of Elath on the Red Sea and on to Arabia. Originally Ramoth had been held by the Israelites; but apparently in the days of Omri it had been captured by the Arameans. It was among the cities ceded by Ben-hadad I after his defeat and capture by Ahaz at the battle of Aphek. To strengthen his forces, Ahab summoned his ally, and possibly at this time vassal, Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, to join him in the campaign. Following the long-established custom, the king of Judah demanded that they should first consult the prophets of Jehovah regarding the outcome of the campaign.

The prominence of the prophets at this time in Northern Israel is shown by the fact that Ahab is able at once to summon about four hundred. In the name of Jehovah these official prophets predicted victory with such unanimity that Jehoshaphat's suspicions were aroused. It is evident in the light of the sequel that they were a body of prophets, ap-

parently, like the prophets of Baal, connected with the royal sanctuaries and supported either directly or indirectly by court favor. Here again the indirect influence of Baalism may be recognized. Although they prophesied in the name of Jehovah, the God of Israel, it is evident that they were dominated by mercenary motives. Their presence shows how deep seated was the religious degeneracy against which the true prophets, like Elijah and Elisha, struggled. The incident also brings to the front, for a brief instant, another true prophet, who spoke not to secure royal favor, but as his deepest convictions dictated. Ahab's reference to him indicates that Micaiah, like Elijah, found little to commend and much to condemn in the character and policy of the king.

It was a striking scene when this unpopular prophet was brought into the presence of the allied kings of the north and the south and, in the face of the definite predictions of the four hundred royal prophets, declared that only calamity awaited the king and people of Israel. The sarcastic prediction of success with which Micaiah introduced his prophecy, revealed his supreme contempt for his mercenary fellow prophets, and for the king who was ready to sacrifice even truth and religion for the realization of his selfish policy.

III. **The Prototype of Satan.** To confirm his prediction Micaiah uttered a parable which dramatically set forth the motive which actuated the false prophets. The heavenly scene thus pictured is strikingly similar to that presented in the opening chapters of the book of Job. Jehovah sits on his throne with angelic beings about him. The occasion is a divine council, corresponding to that at which the kings of Israel and Judah were then presiding. Jehovah's disapproval of Ahab and his acts is implied by the question of how the king may be lured on to his ruin. Different counsels are suggested, until finally a certain spirit comes forth and proposes that Jehovah put a lying message in the mouth of his prophets. The proposal meets with the divine approval, and the spirit is commissioned to go forth and carry out his plan.

Here is found the first allusion in Israel's history to a heavenly being whose rôle corresponds in part to that of the Satan of later Jewish belief. He is still an accredited member of the heavenly hierarchy and his act meets with full approval, and yet he manifests a zeal in misleading mankind which is in many ways akin to that attributed to Satan in later Jewish thought.

Although the story was clearly intended by Micaiah to be a dramatic illustration of his message, it would have been meaningless to his hear-

ers were not the conceptions of Jehovah and of the angelic beings, which it reflects, already firmly fixed in the popular mind. The roots of these beliefs may be traced in the early Semitic mythology. The modifications are due to the influence of Israel's faith, which attributed to Jehovah a transcendent position, far above all other heavenly beings. The incident discloses that broad underlying current of popular belief against which the true prophets of the latter day set their faces in their divinely inspired endeavor to proclaim the one supreme God of justice and love.

Like Jeremiah and other true prophets Micaiah was obliged, for his true speaking, to suffer persecution and indignity at the hands of his false brethren, and imprisonment at the command of the king; but his action shows that at this critical period in Israel's history Elijah and Elisha did not stand entirely alone.

IV. **Ahab's Death.** Following his own desire and the counsel of his false prophets, Ahab went forth to battle; but he bowed before Micaiah's prediction so far as to disguise himself. Ahab's importance as a commander and leader is indicated by the orders of the Aramean king to his captains that they direct the attack solely against the king of Israel. Jehoshaphat narrowly escaped falling a victim to this command. Ahab, however, was mortally wounded by a chance arrow; but with marvellous strength and courage he fought throughout the day, propped up in his chariot. When at evening he died and the news spread throughout his army, each man returned to his native town, and the Arameans were left in possession of Ramoth in Gilead.

Thus died on the field of battle the most active and energetic warrior who ever sat on the throne of Northern Israel. Ahab's courage in battle and his sagacity as a diplomat are unquestioned; but his ambition and his attitude toward his subjects were those of a tyrant. His latter days witnessed the beginning of the decay of that kingdom for which he had sacrificed the nobler religious ideals of his race. His supreme mistake was in trampling upon the liberties of his subjects and in disregarding Jehovah's claim to the complete and absolute loyalty of his people. The good is often the enemy of the best. In the pursuit of a worthy, but not the noblest ambition revealed to his race and age, Ahab sinned and brought ultimate disaster upon his house and nation.

V. **The Reign of Ahaziah.** Calamities in quick succession pursued the house of Ahab. Ahaziah, who succeeded him, suffered a severe accident. Tradition states that this son of Jezebel and Ahab sent messengers to consult Baal-Zebub the god of Ekron, regarding his recovery. In

connection with this mission, Elijah for the last time appeared in Israel's political history to protest against Ahaziah's apostasy and to predict the death of the king, which speedily followed.

VI. **The War Against Moab.** Little is recorded regarding Jehoram, the son of Ahab, who succeeded his brother Ahaziah. His reign must have been short; for contrary to the chronology of Kings, which attributes fourteen years to the reigns of Ahaziah and Jehoram, but twelve years elapsed between the time when, in 854 B.C., Ahab fought at Karkar and 842 B.C. when Jehu, who exterminated the house of Omri, paid tribute to the king of Assyria. Evidently the war with the Arameans continued; for at the time of his death Jehoram had been wounded in an engagement at Ramoth in Gilead.

The chief event of his reign appears to have been a campaign against the Moabites. The contemporary inscription of Mesha, the Moabite king (*cf.* § LXII[iii]), states definitely that the Israelites retained possession of Moab for forty years after its capture by Omri. It also gives a vivid description of the recapture of the northern Moabite cities by Mesha; of the putting to death of the Hebrew colonists in the name of the Moabite god, Chemosh, and of the fortification of these northern border towns: "And I fortified Baal-meon; and I made in it the reservoir; and I fortified Kirjathaim. And the men of Gad had occupied the land of Ataroth from of old; and the king of Israel built Ataroth for himself. And I fought against the city and took it. And I slew all the people; the city (became) a gazing-stock to Chemosh and to Moab. And from there I brought the altar-hearth of Dodoh (?); and I dragged it before Chemosh in Kerioth; and I caused the men of Sharon (?) to dwell there, and also the men of . . .

"Then Chemosh said to me, 'Go and take Nebo against Israel. So I went by night and fought against it from the break of dawn until noon, and I took it and slew them all—seven thousand men and women and . . . female slaves—for I had devoted it to Ashtar-chemosh. And I took from there the altar-hearths of Jehovah, and dragged them before Chemosh. And the king of Israel had fortified Jahaz, and occupied it while he fought against me. But Chemosh drove him out before me. I took two hundred men of Moab—all its poverty-stricken citizens—and I brought them into Jahaz and took possession of it, to add it to Dibon.

"I fortified Karhoh, the wall of the forests and the wall of the acropolis. And I built its gates; and I built the royal palace; and I constructed the sluices of the reservoir for the water in the midst of the city.

And there was no cistern in the midst of the city, in Karhoh; so I said to the people, 'Each of you make a cistern in his own house.' And I cut the trenches for Karhoh with the help of the prisoners of Israel.

"I built Aroer, and I made the highway by the Arnon. I rebuilt Beth-bamoth, for it had been overthrown. I rebuilt Bezer, for it was in ruins, (with the help of) fifty men of Dibon, for all Dibon was obedient. And I reigned over a hundred (chiefs) in the cities which I added to the land. And I built Medeba and Beth-diblathaim and Beth-baal-meon."

The campaign recorded in the popular Elisha stories evidently followed the Moabite rebellion recorded in the Mesha inscription. Again Jehoshaphat of Judah joined his forces with those of his kinsman Jehoram (or Joram). To avoid the fortified cities in the north, the campaign was carried around the southern end of the Dead Sea. Elisha figures as the prophetic adviser of the allied kings. When their armies were threatened, because of lack of water in the barren region to the south of the Dead Sea, Elisha is represented as predicting, while in a state of ecstasy induced by music, that they should have an abundant supply of water and should overrun the land of the Moabites. Apparently the next morning, as the result of a heavy fall of rain in the uplands of Edom, the watercourses were filled with water as the prophet had predicted. The Moabites, misinterpreting natural phenomena, confidently attacked the allied Hebrew armies, but were defeated and put to flight. Southern Moab was conquered and pillaged and the king was shut up in one of his fortresses. The tradition states that in his extremity he sacrificed, as a burnt offering on the walls of the fortress, his eldest son in order to call forth the pity and aid of his god. The act apparently aroused the superstitious horror of the allies, for they retired without completing the conquest of Moab.

This incident concludes the warlike history of the house of Omri. Under the leadership of this dynasty Israel had fought many and, for the most part, successful wars with the strong and bitter foes which encircled it. The effect of these wars between the petty states of Palestine had been, on the whole, disastrous, for they had only engendered greater bitterness, exhausted the natural resources of the land, and prepared the way for its ultimate conquest by Assyria which was slowly but surely advancing from the northeast.

§LXV. JEHU'S REVOLUTION AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

1. Anointing of Jehu at Elisha's command (II K. 9 1-6, 10b)

Now Elisha the prophet called one of the sons of the prophets and said to him, Gird up your loins, take this flask of oil in your hand and go to Ramoth in Gilead. And when you arrive there look for Jehu the son of Jehoshaphat, the son of Nimshi, and go in and make him rise up from among his kinsmen and bring him into an inner chamber. Then take the flask of oil and pour it on his head and say, 'Thus saith Jehovah, "I have anointed thee king over Israel." ' Then open the door and flee without delay. So the young man (the servant of the prophet) went to Ramoth in Gilead. And just as he arrived, the commanders of the army were sitting together. And he said, I have a word for you, O commander. And Jehu said, To which of us all? And he said, To you, O commander. Then he arose and went into the house. And [the young man] poured the oil on his head and said to him, Thus saith Jehovah, the God of Israel, 'I have anointed thee king over Jehovah's people Israel.' Then he opened the door and fled.

2. Proclamation of Jehu as king (11-13)

When Jehu came out to the servants of his lord, they asked him, Is all well? Why did this insane fellow come to you? And he said to them, You know the man and his talk. And they said, It is false! Tell us now. And he said, Thus and thus he spoke to me, saying, 'Thus saith Jehovah, "I have anointed thee king over Israel." ' Then they quickly took each his garment, laid it at his feet and on the bare stairs, and blew the trumpet, crying, Jehu is king!

3. His plan to slay Joram (14-16)

So Jehu the son of Jehoshaphat, the son of Nimshi, conspired against Joram. Now Jehu, together with all Israel, was defending Ramoth in Gilead against Hazael king of Aram, but King Joram had returned to be healed in Jezreel of the wounds which the Arameans had given him, when he fought with Hazael king of Aram. And Jehu said, If it be in your mind, then let none escape from the city to go to tell it in Jezreel. Then Jehu mounted his chariot and went to Jezreel, for Joram lay there. And Ahaziah king of Judah had come down to see Joram.

4. His approach to Jezreel (17-20)

Now the watchman was standing on the tower of Jezreel, when he saw the cloud of dust about Jehu, as he came, and said, I see a cloud of dust. And Joram said, Take a horseman and send him to meet them that he may inquire whether all is well. So one went on horseback to meet him and said, Thus saith the king, 'Is all well?' And Jehu replied, What have you to do with welfare? Turn about and follow me. So the watchman reported, The messenger came to them, but comes not back. Then he sent out a second horseman who came to them and said, Thus saith the king, 'Is all well?' And Jehu answered, What have you to do with welfare? Turn about and follow me. So the watchman reported, He also came to them but comes not back; however, the driving is like the driving of Jehu the son of Nimshi, for he is wont to drive furiously.

5. Joram's death by the hand of Jehu (21-26)

Then Joram said, Make ready. And as soon as they had made ready his chariot, Joram king of Israel and Ahaziah king of Judah set out, each in his chariot, and they went to meet Jehu and found him in the field of Naboth the Jezreelite. And when Joram saw Jehu, he said, Is all well, Jehu? And he answered, How can all be well, as long as the whoredoms of your mother Jezebel and her witchcrafts are so many? Then Joram turned about to flee, and said to Ahaziah, Treachery, Ahaziah! But Jehu, being already armed, shot his bow and struck Joram between his shoulders, so that the arrow went through his heart and he sank down in his chariot. Then Jehu said to Bidkar his captain, Take him up and cast him in the field of Naboth the Jezreelite, for I remember how that, when I and you rode together after Ahab his father, Jehovah pronounced this judgment upon him: 'Surely I saw yesterday the blood of Naboth and his sons,' saith Jehovah; 'and I will requite thee in this plot,' saith Jehovah. Now therefore take and cast him into this plot, according to the word of Jehovah.

6. Ahaziah's death (27, 28)

But when Ahaziah the king of Judah saw this, he fled in the direction of Beth-gannim. And Jehu followed after him, with the command, Him also! Smite him in the chariot! And they smote him at the ascent of Gur, which is by Ibleam. But he fled to Megiddo and died there. And

his servants carried him in a chariot to Jerusalem, and buried him in his sepulchre with his fathers in the city of David.

7. Jezebel's fate (30-37)

Then Jehu came to Jezreel. And as soon as Jezebel heard of it, she painted her eyes, attired her head, and looked out at the window. And as Jehu came in at the gate, she said, Is all well, you Zimri, your master's murderer? But he looked up to the window and said, Who is on my side? who? And two or three eunuchs looked at him. And he said, Throw her down. And they threw her down so that some of her blood was spattered on the wall and on the horses, and he trod her under foot. Then he went in and ate and drank. Thereupon he gave the command, See now to this cursed woman and bury her, for she is a king's daughter. But when they went to bury her, they found no more of her than the skull, the feet, and the hands. When, therefore, they came back and told him, he said, This is the word of Jehovah, which he spoke by his servant Elijah the Tishbite, saying, 'In the plot of Jezreel shall the dogs eat Jezebel's flesh, and the body of Jezebel shall be as dung on the face of the field in the plot of Jezreel, so that they cannot say, "This is Jezebel." '

8. Jehu's instructions regarding Ahab's descendants (10 1-6)

Now Ahab had seventy descendants in Samaria. And Jehu wrote letters and sent to Samaria, to the rulers of the city, to the elders, and those who had charge of the descendants of Ahab, saying, Now as soon as this letter comes to you, since you have with you your master's sons, and chariots and horses, fortified cities and arms; choose the best and most capable of your master's sons, and set him on his father's throne and fight for your master's house. But they were exceedingly afraid and said, Behold, the two kings could not stand before him, how then shall we stand? And he who was over the household and he who was over the city, together with the elders and the guardians, sent to Jehu, saying, We are your servants and we will do all that you bid us; we will not make any one king; do what you please. Then he wrote a second letter to them, saying, If you are on my side and if you wish to obey me, then take each of you the head of your master's son [entrusted to you], and meet me at Jezreel to-morrow at this

time. Now the king's sons, seventy in all, were with the great men of the city, who brought them up.

9. Slaughter of Ahab's descendants and friends (7-11)

And as soon as the letter came to them, they took the king's sons and slew them, seventy in all, and put their heads in baskets and sent them to him to Jezreel. And when the messenger came and told him, saying, They have brought the heads of the king's sons, he said, Lay them in two heaps at the entrance of the gate until the morning! And in the morning he went out and stood and said to all the people, You are fair-minded: to be sure I conspired against my master and slew him, but who smote all these? Know now that of the word of Jehovah, which Jehovah spoke against the house of Ahab by his servant Elijah, nothing shall fail of fulfilment. Thereupon Jehu smote all who remained of the house of Ahab in Jezreel, together with all his great men and his kinsmen and his priests, until he left him none remaining.

10. Of the Judean princes (12-14)

Then Jehu set out on the way to Samaria. And as he was at Beth-eked of the shepherds on the way, Jehu met the kinsmen of Ahaziah king of Judah, and said, Who are you? And they answered, We are the kinsmen of Ahaziah, and we have come to visit the children of the king and the children of the queen-mother. And he said, Take them alive. And they took them alive and slew them at the pit of Beth-eked, forty-two men, so that not one of them was left.

11. Compact with Jehonadab (15, 16)

And when he had departed from there he found Jehonadab the son of Rechab coming to meet him. And he saluted him and said to him, Is your heart in sincere sympathy with my heart, as mine is with yours? And Jehonadab answered, It is. Then Jehu said, If it be, give me your hand. And he gave him his hand; and he took him up to him into the chariot. And he said, Come with me, and see my zeal for Jehovah. So he made him ride in his chariot.

12 Destruction of the Baal worshippers (17-27)

And when he came to Samaria, he smote all who remained to Ahab in Samaria, until he had destroyed all, according to the word of Jehovah which he spoke to Elijah. Then Jehu gathered all the people together and said to them, Ahab served Baal a little; but Jehu will serve him much. Now therefore call all the prophets of Baal, all his worship-

pers and all his priests; let none remain behind; for I will make a great sacrifice to Baal; whoever shall remain behind shall not live. But Jehu did it with the secret purpose of destroying the worshippers of Baal. Then Jehu said, Proclaim a solemn assembly for Baal. And they proclaimed it. And Jehu sent through all Israel, and all the worshippers of Baal came, so that there was not a man left who did not come. And when they had come into the temple of Baal, so that the temple of Baal was filled from one end to the other, he said to the one who was in charge of the wardrobe, Bring out garments for all the worshippers of Baal. And he brought out garments for them. Then Jehu, with Jehonadab the son of Rechab, went into the temple of Baal, and said to the worshippers of Baal, Search, and look that there may not be here with you any of the servants of Jehovah, but only worshippers of Baal. Thereupon he went in to offer sacrifices and burnt-offerings. Now Jehu had appointed eighty men outside with the command, The man who allows any of the men, whom I entrust into your hands, to escape, his life shall be for the life of him. And as soon as he had finished offering the burnt-offering, Jehu said to the runners and to the captains, Go in, and slay them, let none come forth. And they put them to the sword, and the runners and the captains cast them out, and went into the sanctuary of the temple of Baal. Then they brought out the asherah from the temple of Baal and burned it, and broke pown the pillar of Baal and destroyed the temple of Baal and made it a draught-house to this day.

13. Political history (82-86)

In those days Jehovah began to loathe Israel, and Hazael smote them in all the territory of Israel, from the Jordan toward the east, all the land of Gilead, the Gadites, the Reubenites, and the Manassites, from Aroer by the valley of the Arnon, including Gilead and Bashan. Now the other acts of Jehu and all that he did, and all his brave deeds, are they not recorded in the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel? And Jehu slept with his fathers, and they buried him in Samaria. And Jehoahaz his son became king in his place. And the time that Jehu reigned over Israel in Samaria was twenty-eight years.

14. The disastrous Aramean invasions (13[1-9])

In the twenty-third year of Joash the son of Ahaziah king of Judah, Jehoahaz the son of Jehu became king over Israel in Samaria; and he reigned seventeen years. And he did that which displeased Jehovah, and the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat with which he led Israel into sin—he did not depart from them. And the anger of Jehovah was kindled against Israel and he delivered them continually into the hand of Hazael king of Aram, and into the hand of Ben-hadad the son of Hazael. Then Jehoahaz besought Jehovah, and Jehovah hearkened to him; for he saw the oppression of Israel, how that the king of Aram oppressed them. Therefore Jehovah gave Israel a saviour, so that they escaped from the hand of the Arameans, and the Israelites could dwell in their homes as formerly. Nevertheless they did not depart from the sins of the house of Jeroboam, with which he led Israel into sin, but walked therein. Also the asherah in Samaria remained standing. And he left to Jehoahaz of the people not more than fifty horsemen, ten chariots, and ten thousand footmen; for the king of Aram destroyed them and made them like the dust in the threshing. Now the other acts of Jehoahaz and all that he did and his brave deeds, are they not recorded in the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel? And Jehoahaz slept with his fathers and they buried him in Samaria. And Jehoash his son became king in his place.

15. Partial deliverance from the Arameans (10. 11-22. 23)

In the thirty-seventh year of Joash king of Judah, Jehoash the son of Jehoahaz became king over Israel in Samaria, and reigned sixteen years. And he did that which displeased Jehovah; he did not depart from all the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat with which he led Israel into sin, but he walked therein. Now Hazael king of Aram oppressed Israel all the days of Jehoahaz. But Jehovah was gracious to them and had compassion on them, and turned again to them, because of his covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and would not destroy them nor as yet cast them from his presence.

16. Recovery of the cities (24. 25)

But when Hazael king of Aram died, Ben-hadad his son became king in his place. Then Jehoash the son of Jehoahaz took again from Ben-hadad the son of Hazael the cities which he had taken in war from Jehoahaz his father.

Three times Jehoash smote him and thus recovered the cities of Israel.

17. End of Jehoash's reign (14[15. 16])

Now the other acts of Jehoash which he did and his mighty deeds, and how he fought with Amaziah king of Judah, are they not recorded in the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel? And Jehoash slept with his fathers, and was buried in Samaria with the kings of Israel. And Jeroboam his son became king in his place.

18. Extension of the boundaries of Israel (23-27)

In the fifteenth year of Amaziah the son of Joash king of Judah, Jeroboam the son of Jehoash king of Israel became king of Israel in Samaria and reigned forty-one years. And he did that which displeased Jehovah: he did not depart from all the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat with which he led Israel into sin. He restored the boundary-line of Israel from the entrance to Hamath to the sea of Arabah, according to the word of Jehovah, the God of Israel, which he spoke by his servant Jonah the son of Amittai, the prophet who was of Gath-hepher. For Jehovah saw the very bitter affliction of Israel, that none was shut up nor left at large, and that there was no helper for Israel. But Jehovah had not determined to blot out the name of Israel from under heaven, so he saved them through Jeroboam the son of Jehoash.

19. Conclusion (28. 29)

Now the other acts of Jeroboam, and all that he did, and his brave deeds, how he carried on war and how he recovered Damascus and Hamath for Israel, are they not recorded in the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel? And Jeroboam slept with his fathers, even with the kings of Israel. And Zechariah his son became king in his place.

I. **The Prophetic Guilds.** The policy of Ahab and the aggressive proselyting activity of Jezebel on the one hand, with the courageous preaching of Elijah and the more quiet educational work of Elisha on the other, developed in Israel a strong and growing party whose watchword was absolute and uncompromising loyalty to Jehovah. The great prophets, like Elijah, Elisha and Micaiah, were the natural leaders in this movement; but it is evident from the popular Elisha stories that the so-called "sons of the prophets" were especially active at this period, and that they were in close touch with the prophetic leaders. Their presence and prominence are evidence of the growing popular

reaction against the encroachments of Baalism. From the references in the popular traditions it is evident that the sons of the prophets lived together in guilds with their wives and children, all sharing a common table. These prophetic guilds were connected with the ancient sanctuaries, such as Bethel, Gilgal and Samaria. As in the days of Samuel, their religious exercises apparently consisted of frenzied ecstasy induced by song and music. The fact that their frenzy was infectious may in part explain why they joined themselves together in guilds. From the reference in I Kings 20^{41} it may be inferred that the members of each guild bore a certain distinguishing mark. While there is no direct evidence, there is every reason to believe that the popular stories in the historical books of the Old Testament, and especially those which gather about the names of Elijah and Elisha, grew up and were transmitted within the circle of those prophetic societies. From II Kings 4^{38} and 6^{1} it may also be inferred that the sons of the prophets, as disciples, at times received instruction from leading prophets like Elisha.

At this period of their history, however, the sons of the prophets figure as more than mere religious enthusiasts. Their zeal for Jehovah impelled them to adopt active measures to drive out the hated followers of Baal. While they themselves probably never took up the sword, it is clear that they aroused public opinion and actively engaged in the politics of their day. They appealed both to the patriotism and to the religious emotions of the people. Their narrowness, intensity and devotion increased the strength of their appeal. Their influence with the people must have been great, for they shared the popular conceptions of Jehovah and enjoyed that peculiar reverence which the ancient East was always ready to pay to those who gave evidence of being under the influence of a supernatural power.

II. **The Jehovah Party in Israel.** Doubtless to the same group of devoted followers of Jehovah belonged Johnadab, whose descendants, the Rechabites, according to Jeremiah 35, still retained down to the period of the Babylonian exile their peculiar life and traditions (§ LXXXVII$^{18-22}$). Their aim was evidently to preserve in its simple purity the old nomadic religion of Jehovah. They were, therefore, bitterly opposed to that Canaanite civilization which had been adopted by the rank and file of the Northern Israelites. They and the Nazirites, whose vow was in many ways similar, stood as a permanent protest against the corruption, intemperance and luxury of the dominant Canaanite civilization.

As the evils of Baalism became more apparent and calamity began to overshadow the house of Ahab, the zealous but narrow champions of

Jehovah began to enlist a wider sympathy and following from the mass of the nation. At last when Joram, the king of Israel, had been smitten by an Aramean foe, the moment seemed ripe for action. It was natural that the rebellion should be instigated by Elisha, the disciple of Elijah and the recognized leader of the zealous Jehovah party.

III. **The Anointing of Jehu.** The revolution itself is recorded fully and vividly in a narrative which is closely related in language, point of view and interest, to the early Elijah stories. Jehu, the commander of the forces of Israel engaged in the siege of the famous city of Ramoth in Gilead, was chosen, because of his position and ruthless energy, to head the revolt. The account implies that there was already an understanding between him and Elisha. As a signal to the people that the right moment for action had arrived and to Jehu that he had the support of the representatives of Jehovah, one of the sons of the prophets was dispatched by Elisha to anoint Jehu. The anointing, which signified a divine call to an unique service, and, in the case of a military leader like Jehu, to nothing less than the kingship of Israel, was performed in secret; but it soon became known to the other officers in the army. So far had the spirit of reaction against the house of Ahab permeated even the military class, that they immediately proclaimed Jehu king.

Leaving the warriors behind, with the command that no one be allowed to follow him, Jehu set out alone in hot haste to establish his title to the kingship by slaying the reigning king. Fortune favored the revolutionist. Joram, with his guest and kinsman, Ahaziah, king of Judah, came out to meet Jehu. The place of the meeting was the field of Naboth with its tragic memories. To the king's salutation, "Is all well?" Jehu replied that conditions could not be well, while the malign influence of Jezebel dominated the court and kingdom. Then as the king, alarmed by this ominous reply, turned to flee, he fell mortally wounded by the hand of Jehu, and his body was cast into the field of Naboth. Ahaziah, of Judah, who had married the daughter of Ahab and Jezebel, was also slain at Jehu's command.

IV. **Jehu's Bloody Reform Measures.** Personal ambition and blind religious zeal were so blended in the energetic, ruthless character of Jehu that his revolution was the most bloody recorded in all of Israel's history. Jezebel was naturally his next victim. Attired in all her finery, the aged queen met him with a bitter taunt. To the last she played consistently the rôle of an imperious queen. No one was found in the court or land of Israel to take up the sword in defence of Jezebel or

the house of Ahab. Ignominiously she died, and her fate was regarded as signal evidence of a divine judgment and a fulfilment of the stern prediction of Elijah.

From the point of view of her race and religion, Jezebel was doubtless adjudged a supremely able and devoted servant of the Baal of Tyre. From the point of view of Israel, she was the evil genius who brought divine displeasure and calamity upon Ahab, his family and his kingdom.

Ahab's descendants in Samaria were also put to death at Jehu's instigation. Even the Judean princes, who were captured in the territory of Northern Israel, did not escape Jehu's mad zeal to root out all offspring of the hated house of Ahab. By this act the friendly relation, which had been established between the two Hebrew kingdoms in the days of Ahab, was forever severed. According to the tradition, Jehu's religious fervor was not cooled until all the prophets and worshippers of Baal, together with the pillar and temple, were completely destroyed.

Jehu's acts were doubtless approved by the extremists of his day. It is true that the evils which he undertook to correct were deep-seated and deadly. Disloyalty to Jehovah was counted in ancient Israel as treason, and treason in all ages has been punished by death. Jehu also lived before the conception of Jehovah as the God not only of justice but of love had been clearly proclaimed to the race. But measured even by the standards of his own age, his deeds as recorded by tradition cannot be wholly justified. Politically, Jehu's policy of slaying the leaders of his nation was as disastrous as it was indefensible. It left his kingdom weak and open to attack on every side at the moment when all its strength was needed to meet the great dangers which impended. The prophet Hosea, who saw clearly the mistakes of the past, absolutely condemned Jehu's bloody acts (§ LXIX[2]).

V. **Jehu's Tribute to Assyria.** Although the biblical narrative contains no reference to the event, it appears from the famous black obelisk of Shalmaneser II, that in 842 B.C., Jehu, together with the Tyrians and Sidonians, paid tribute to the Assyrian king. This tribute consisted of "silver, gold, a golden bowl, golden goblets, a golden ladle, golden pitchers, bars of lead, a sceptre for the hand of the king and spear shafts." This tribute is a confession of weakness and reveals Jehu's desire not only to purchase immunity from the attack of the Assyrians, but also to secure their aid in establishing his position on the throne of Israel. It marks a complete reversal of the policy of the house of Ahab, which had so valiantly fought against the Assyrian invader.

At this time, and also in 839 B.C., the Arameans suffered most from the Assyrian attack; but the city of Damascus survived the siege, and when the Assyrian armies retired, the kingdom of Damascus, under Hazael, rapidly recovered its strength and supremacy.

VI. **The Cruel Oppression by the Arameans.** During the half century following 839 B.C., the fortunes of Northern Israel reached their lowest ebb. Hazael of Damascus proved an ambitious and energetic ruler. He was not slow to avenge the disloyalty of Jehu in paying tribute to their common foe Assyria. His armies ravaged the east-Jordan territory of Gilead and Bashan, and even penetrated as far south as the Philistine town of Gath, which was completely destroyed. The barbarity of the conqueror knew no limit. Cities were pillaged, men were pitilessly slain, women were ravished, and Hebrew children were dragged off to cruel slavery. Even before the death of Jehu, all of the east-Jordan territory, including Moab, appears to have been captured by the Arameans. Under Jehoahaz, Jehu's son and successor, Northern Israel suffered even greater reverses and indignities, which the biblical historian passes over with the general but significant statement that "the king of Aram destroyed the Israelites and made them like the dust in the threshing." Only fifty horsemen, ten chariots and ten thousand footmen remained to protect the northern kingdom, which at this time had probably become but a dependency of Damascus. It is perhaps from this period that the story in II Kings 6^{24}–7^{17} comes, which tells of a siege of Samaria by the Arameans so severe that in their hunger the people within the city were beginning to devour their own children.

VII. **The Revival of Northern Israel under Jehoash and Jeroboam.** In 803 B.C. Damascus, together with Tyre, Sidon and Israel, paid tribute to Adad-nirari III, the Assyrian king who was then carrying on war against the states of northern Syria. According to the biblical narrative, at the accession of Jehoash, the grandson of Jehu, which occurred about this time, the tide of battle turned and Israel began to regain its independence and lost territory. The reason given by the author of Kings for this change was because "Jehovah raised up a saviour for Israel." Hitherto this saviour has been identified with Assyria; but from the contemporary inscriptions it is clear that for the next thirty years, to the end of the reign of Shalmaneser III, the Assyrians were fully occupied at home defending their empire from the attack of the northern kingdom of Urartu.

In the light of an Aramaic inscription recently discovered in North-

ern Assyria by M. Pognon, the French consul in Mesopotamia, it would now appear that the saviour which delivered the Northern Israelites from the cruel rule of Damascus was another Aramean kingdom which rose to power at the beginning of the eighth century before Christ, and conquered Damascus, as well as northern Syria.

The inscription consists of four stone fragments, the lower part of a monolith once surmounted by a statue, probably representing the conquering king who reared the monument. Of the fifty or sixty lines, but fifteen are well preserved; but these and the remaining fragments make it possible to determine the general purport of the inscription. The first part, which is the best preserved, reads: "The stele which Zakar, king of Hamath and Laash, erected to El-Ur and inscribed it, ZAKAR KING OF HAMATH AND LAASH.

"I was a man of humble birth and the Lord of Heaven helped me and supported me, and the Lord of Heaven made me king over Hazrak. And Ben-hadad son of Hazael king of Aram united against me seventeen kings. Ben-hadad and his army, Ben-raggash and his army, and the king of Cilicia and his army, and the king of Aruk and his army, and the king of Gurgum and his army, and the king of Samal and his army, and the king of Miliz . . . and seven kings and their armies. All these kings laid siege to Hazrak. And they raised a wall higher than the wall of Hazrak, and dug a trench deeper than its trench. Then I lifted up my hands to the Lord of Heaven, and the Lord of Heaven answered and spoke to me through seers and astrologers and said to me: 'Fear not, for I made thee king, and will support thee and will deliver thee from these kings who are besieging thee.'"

From the broken fragments which follow it is clear that this otherwise unknown king of Hazrak utterly vanquished his foes and conquered their territory. Of his two later capitals, Hamath was the famous city on the River Orontes in central Syria. Since the discoverer has not yet disclosed the place at which the inscription was discovered, the site of Hazrak has not yet been made public. It is clearly to be identified with the Hadrach referred to in Zechariah 9^1 in connection with Damascus and in the Assyrian Eponym Canon as Hatarikka, situated somewhere to the north of Damascus.

The rise of this powerful yet hitherto almost unknown kingdom must have been somewhere between 800 and 772 B.C., for in 772 the Assyrian king Ashurdan III made an expedition against Damascus, and in the following year another against Hatarikka. The statement is so brief in the Eponym Canon that there is no suggestion regarding the result

of these campaigns, but inasmuch as they were not repeated and the remainder of the reign of Ashurdan, until 755 B.C., was devoted to suppressing rebellions nearer home, it would seem clear that the strength of the northern Aramean kingdom founded by Zakar remained unbroken, possibly until the middle of the eighth century.

The hour of Damascus's humiliation was Northern Israel's opportunity. Jehoash of Israel and his successor Jeroboam II, in a series of campaigns against the Damascenes, recovered their ancient territory and reestablished their prestige, until the boundary of Israel extended from the territory of the Aramean kingdom with its capital at Hamath in the north, to the southeast of the Dead Sea. Even Amaziah, the strong king of Judah, who rashly challenged Jehoash to battle, was defeated, and part of the wall of Jerusalem was torn down. From the people of Judah, as well as from the neighboring nations whom they had conquered, the kings of Israel received rich spoil and tribute. The victories and prosperity of the reign of Jeroboam II were all the more impressive because of the contrast with the defeats and calamities of the preceding years. It was the Indian summer of Northern Israel's history. Overconfidence succeeded the former despondency, and the leaders of the people began to shut their eyes to existing evils and to dream of a world-wide empire. The end for which Elijah and Elisha had struggled—the extermination of Baalism in Israel—had been realized, and the nation had at last recovered from the shock of Jehu's revolution. But new political and social dangers loomed on Israel's horizon, and a new type of prophet and a far broader and truer conception of Jehovah and of his demands were required to guide the people in meeting these new crises.

§ LXVI. AMOS'S ARRAIGNMENT OF NORTHERN ISRAEL

Thus saith Jehovah:
For three transgressions of Damascus,
Yea, for four, I will not revoke it;
Because they have thrashed Gilead with thrashing instruments of iron.

1. The crimes of the Arameans (Am.1[3])

Therefore I will send fire into the house of Hazael,
And it shall devour the palaces of Ben-hadad,
And I will break the bar of Damascus,

2. Judgment awaiting them (4, 5)

And I will cut off the inhabitants from the valley of Aven,
And him who holdeth the sceptre from Beth-Eden;
And the people of Aram shall go into captivity to Kir,
Saith Jehovah.

3. Crimes of the Philistines (6)

Thus saith Jehovah:
For three transgressions of Gaza,
Yea, for four, I will not revoke it;
Because they carried away captive all the people,
To deliver them up to Edom.

4. Judgment that awaits them (7.8)

Therefore I will send fire on the wall of Gaza,
And it shall devour her palaces.
And I will cut off the inhabitants from Ashdod,
And him who holds the sceptre from Askelon,
And I will turn my hand against Ekron,
And the remnant of the Philistines shall perish,
Saith Jehovah.

5. Crimes of the Ammonites (13)

Thus saith Jehovah,
For three transgressions of the Ammonites,
Yea, for four, I will not revoke it;
Because they have ripped up the pregnant women of Gilead,
That they might enlarge their border.

6. Judgment that awaits them (14. 15)

Therefore I will kindle a fire on the wall of Rabbah,
And it shall destroy her palaces,
With a war-cry in the day of battle,
With a tempest in the day of the whirlwind.
And their king shall go into exile,
He and his nobles together,
Saith Jehovah.

7. Crimes of the Moabites (2 1. 2c)

Thus saith Jehovah:
For three transgressions of Moab,
Yea, for four, I will not revoke it;
Because they have burned the bones of the king of Edom,
To desecrate the dead on account of violence done to Moab.

Therefore I will send a fire into Moab,
And it shall devour the palaces of Kirioth,
With war-cry, with the sound of trumpets;
And I will cut off the ruler from her midst,
And all his nobles will I slay with him,
Saith Jehovah.

8. Judgment that awaits them (2a. b. d. 3)

Thus saith Jehovah:
For three transgressions of Israel,
Yea, for four, I will not revoke it;
Because they sell the righteous for money,
And the needy for a pair of shoes.
Who trample on the head of the poor,
And turn aside the way of the humble.
And a man and his father go into the same maid,
And so profane my holy name;
Upon garments taken in pledge they stretch themselves beside every altar,
And the wine of those who have been fined they drink in the house of their God.

9. The superlative crimes of the Israelites (6-8)

And yet it was I who brought you up from the land of Egypt,
And led you forty years in the wilderness,
And brought you hither to possess the land of the Amorites.
And it was I who destroyed from before you the Amorite.
Whose height was like that of the cedars, and he was strong as the oaks;
Yet I destroyed his fruit from above and his roots from beneath.

10. What Jehovah has done for them (10. 9)

Moreover I raised up some of your sons to be prophets and some of your youths to be Nazirites.
Is not this indeed so, O Israel? It is the oracle of Jehovah.
But ye made the Nazirites drink wine and upon the prophets ye laid a prohibition.

11. Instruction by prophets and Nazirites (11. 12)

Behold it is I who will make you groan in your places,
As groans a wagon under its load of sheaves.

12. Judgment

13. Impossibility of escape (14-16)

Then shall refuge fail the swift,
And the strongest shall not avail himself of his strength,
Neither shall the warrior deliver himself,
Nor he who handles the bow stand,
Nor the swift of foot escape.
Even he who is mounted shall not save his life;
But he who is stoutest of heart among warriors
Shall flee away naked in that day;
It is the oracle of Jehovah.

I. Political Conditions in Northern Israel under Jeroboam II. The long and prosperous reign of Jeroboam II (781–740 B.C.) marks the zenith of Northern Israel's prosperity. The east-Jordan territory had been reconquered from the Arameans. The Moabites had apparently been reduced to subjection, and the Ammonites on the east and the Philistines on the west ceased to be a menace to Israel's peace. Except in the south, the old boundaries of David's empire were reestablished. Peace gave the Northern Israelites ample opportunity to develop the rich natural resources of their kingdom. They felt that they had again taken their place among the great nations of southwestern Asia. Their success and prosperity were interpreted as clear evidence of Jehovah's favor and an earnest that he had still greater conquests and glories in store for them.

The political situation, however, afforded no basis for these vain delusions. Already the Assyrian armies, after having been detained for nearly a century by local uprisings and internal dissensions, were beginning to move westward. Against the numerous, well-equipped forces of Assyria the petty people of Syria and Palestine were practically helpless. Israel's danger was all the greater, because the leaders of the nation were shutting their eyes to the ominous facts.

II. Society and Religion in Israel. Social conditions within Israel were equally alarming. In the early days each Hebrew lived on his own hereditary estate. The native slave class appears to have been small. There was no marked distinction between king, noble and subject. The Aramean wars, however, had fundamentally altered these simple conditions. In the protracted disastrous campaigns many of the free Israelite families had lost their hereditary estates and had been reduced to servitude; for slavery for himself or his family was the fate of every Hebrew who could not pay his debts. Moreover, Jehu's revolution had brought to the front a strong military class that had been

brutalized by the horrible bloodshed and cruelty which had characterized the Aramean wars.

Returning prosperity brought wealth and opportunities for commerce to the nobles, who enjoyed the royal patronage, but only greater bondage to the poverty-stricken masses, who were at the mercy of their greedy creditors and cruel rulers. The social evils of the East soon became glaringly apparent. Among Semitic peoples judicial decisions were always referred either to the civil or religious officials. When the rulers were corrupt, the dependent classes were constantly subject to a type of legalized robbery from which there was no redress. Thus through bribery and unjust decisions the common people were reduced still further to a condition of servitude; the free middle class almost entirely disappeared; and, in their new and mad zeal to build palaces and to indulge in the prevailing forms of luxury, the rulers neglected more and more the demands of ordinary justice and mercy.

The old popular Semitic conception of religion still prevailed. As long as the rulers brought rich sacrifices to the sanctuaries and faithfully met the demands of the ritual, they were confident of Jehovah's favor and protection and were blind to the glaring contrast between their public professions and their private acts. The very offerings which they brought to Jehovah were wrested from their dependent fellow-countrymen by injustice or oppression. Even the great religious festivals at the sanctuaries were characterized by gluttony, drunkenness and immorality; and yet they believed that they were thus by the splendor of their ritual purchasing Jehovah's continued favor. The situation was well calculated to arouse the apprehensions of an enlightened onlooker and to stir him to strenuous action.

III. **Date of Amos's Appearance.** The superscription to the book of Amos gives little aid in determining the prophet's date, for it represents a period of nearly half a century. The two kings of Israel and Judah, Jeroboam II and Uzziah, reigned contemporaneously between the years 780 and 740 B.C. From references within the book it is clear that Amos's activity belonged to the latter rather than to the earlier part of this period. The political, social and economic conditions in Northern Israel, reflected in the prophet's addresses, indicate that many years had elapsed since the tide of prosperity turned toward Northern Israel. From paragraphs [3] and [4], it may be inferred that Gath had already been captured by Uzziah. The reference to the eclipse in § LXVIII [11] is probably to the solar eclipse of 763 B.C., recorded in the Assyrian Eponym Canon. During the reigns of Shalmaneser III and

Ashurdan III the Assyrian armies had ceased (except in the two campaigns of 772–1 B.C., *cf.* § LXV [vii]) to invade the West Country. These invasions were not resumed until the reign of Tiglath-pileser IV, who came to the throne in 745 B.C. While Amos's references to the advance of Assyria are somewhat indefinite, there is a ring of certainty and a note of impending doom which suggest that the dread invaders are not far distant. In the light of all these and other considerations, the date of Amos's preaching was evidently somewhere between 750 and 740, and probably about 745 B.C.

IV. **Amos's Personal History.** In the superscriptions to his prophecies, and later in the seventh chapter, Amos is described as a man who took charge of small animals, such as sheep and goats. He is also called a dresser of sycamore trees. The fruit of this tree was ground for flour out of which a coarse bread was made. This bread was apparently eaten only by the poorer classes. His double occupation suggests that Amos was one who sought employment wherever he could find it at the different seasons of the year, and that, therefore, he came from the poorest laboring class in the land. The fact that the name of his father is not given also indicates that he belonged to an obscure family. His home was Tekoa, twelve miles south of Jerusalem and twenty-two from the sanctuary of Bethel, the scene of his ministry. The little town of Tekoa, shut in by gray limestone hills on the north and west, and looking down to the southeast over a rocky, barren wilderness which extends to the Dead Sea, was a fitting home for the stern prophet of reform. Here the life of a shepherd was a constant struggle with inclement nature and wild beasts. It was an environment calculated to develop men of iron, inured to hardship, bold in the presence of danger and opposition, keen of eye, and quick to interpret the signs of the times and to sound the cry of warning. The independence of his shepherd life and possibly the necessity of finding markets for the wool produced by the flock, gave Amos an acquaintance, not merely with Tekoa, but with the larger world about the eastern Mediterranean.

His knowledge of conditions in Egypt, in Northern Israel, and even in distant Assyria, indicate, either that he had travelled widely or else had conversed frequently with traders and travellers from these distant lands. Of his later life no facts are known except those which gather about his memorable mission to the Northern Israelite sanctuary at Bethel. Like Elijah, he suddenly emerges from his desert environment and sweeps across the horizon of Israel, occupying for a

brief time the central place—at least in the perspective of history—and then disappears, leaving his message to sink gradually into the consciousness of his race and to bear rich fruit in subsequent generations.

V. **The Personality of the Prophet.** The real character of Amos is clearly revealed in the remarkable addresses which have been preserved in the prophecy which bears his name. His independence of all human authority, and his marvellously keen perception are peculiar to his nomadic point of view and training. His boldness is not begotten by passion or religious frenzy but by a calm study of conditions and a mature judgment. While he employed a great wealth and variety of figures, Amos was at heart a realist rather than an idealist. He knew conditions in Israel from actual knowledge and careful study. From these premises he reasoned to certain conclusions, with a clear, forceful logic which was irresistible. Although from the humblest ranks, Amos was clearly one of the best educated men of his age; but his school was that of experience and observation. With the important facts of Israel's early history he was well acquainted. He also possessed an astonishing knowledge of the ethnology, geography and sociology of the world and age in which he lived. On the basis of this wide knowledge, under the influence of the divine spirit upon his keenly receptive mind, he had arrived at certain definite convictions which differed fundamentally from those which prevailed in his day.

With characteristic directness and fearlessness, he set forth to impress his God-given message upon the minds of the political and religious leaders of his race. His appearance at Bethel was one of the most significant events in human history. Single handed, trusting only in God, whose messenger he was, he attacked the established traditions, the cherished institutions, and the narrow religious conceptions of his race and age, and proclaimed instead certain universal principles which have become the basis of modern faith and ethics.

VI. **Amos's Method of Securing a Hearing.** No reformer or apostle of truth ever faced greater odds than Amos, when he appeared at the royal sanctuary of Bethel. The occasion was evidently one of the annual festivals, when all classes, and especially the rich and rulers, were gathered from every part of the land to share their offerings with Jehovah amid song and glad rejoicing. The sense of power, of prosperity, and of enjoying Jehovah's favor was strong in the minds of the assembled multitudes. Nothing could seem more incongruous than to proclaim on this joyful occasion the downfall of the nation and the futility of all the proud ceremonialism; and yet this was Amos's purpose.

Coming also as he did from the rival southern kingdom, which had only recently suffered for its presumption a crushing defeat from a Northern Israelite army, Amos, the Judean, could expect only suspicion and contempt. His shepherd garb and his sunburned features also proclaimed the fact that he came from the ranks, and therefore had little in common with the richly clad nobles and the luxury-loving women whom he found at Bethel. But Amos proved himself a man not only with a message but with tact to deliver it. His aim in his opening address was clearly not only to win a hearing from an antagonistic audience, but also to compel his hearers to assent to certain fundamental principles which he forthwith asked them to apply to themselves.

The text:

> "Whenever Jehovah roars from Zion,
> And utters his voice from Jerusalem,
> The pastures of the shepherds mourn,
> And the top of Carmel withers,"

was probably added by some later editor, who possibly took it from Joel 3^{16} and introduced it here because it appropriately epitomizes the thought of the book as a whole. Amos himself, with supremer tact, opened his address with a powerful yet just arraignment of Israel's most hated foe, the Arameans. In epigrammatic language he declared by implication and plain statement that hitherto Jehovah had repeatedly overlooked the crimes of the people whose proud capital was Damascus; but that, at last, they had sinned beyond forgiveness and that the Divine Judge would no longer withhold the sentence. The typical crime cited was the cruelty with which these northern foes treated the Hebrew victims of their conquests in the east-Jordan region. The figure of the thrashing instrument, with its projecting teeth of iron, which on the rocky thrashing-floor ground even the straw to chaff, recalled vividly to the minds of the graybeards in Amos's audience the memories of Aramean attack, slaughter and pitiless plunder. Therefore they rejoiced in his words, and all recognized the justice of the judgment about to be meted out to their guilty foes. The Arameans had transgressed even the cruel laws of war; hence it was but just that the foreign conqueror, Assyria, should pillage and burn the palaces of Hazael and Ben-hadad, should slay the inhabitants of the tributary valleys, and should carry away the remnant of the people into captivity in distant Assyria.

Similarly those other foes of the Hebrews, the Philistines to the south-

west had showed no pity to their captives, but had sold them into shameful captivity. Therefore the same conqueror, as Jehovah's agent, must pillage and burn their palaces and cities and carry away their people into captivity.

In his initial address Amos apparently spoke only of the hated foes of the Northern Israelites. Next, therefore, the Ammonites, east of the Jordan, were arraigned by the prophet. Upon them falls the same divine judgment, couched in the same grim formula of doom. Their typical crime is also that of a cruelty and greed which knew no pity. They likewise should soon know the woes of brutal conquest.

The typical crime of the Moabites, the fourth and last of Israel's foes, was a senseless act of impiety toward the dead—a crime which was condemned by all ancient people. Apparently in some hostile foray they had broken open a royal tomb and dragged out and burned the bones of an Edomite king. For this and kindred acts of violence, Jehovah's agent of judgment was about to sweep over the land of Moab.

VII. **The Universal Principles Established in Amos's Opening Address.** The effect of Amos's opening words upon his audience can readily be imagined. The garb, the strange accent and the austere aspect of the prophet had already been forgotten. Each oracle, which he uttered in the same measured formula, was received by all members of his audience with glad acclaim. That which they had secretly hoped was now openly proclaimed in their ears by a prophet of Jehovah. No one could gainsay the justice of his words and the principles upon which they were based; and yet those principles were in fundamental contradiction to the accepted faith and practice of all his hearers. Formulated in universal terms they were: (1) Jehovah rules not only over Israel, but over all peoples; therefore all are alike accountable to him for their acts. (2) Jehovah is merciful and long overlooks the crimes of nations; but the time surely comes when he must and will punish deliberate and continuous wrong-doing. (3) Each nation is responsible to him in direct proportion to its opportunity and enlightenment. (4) Jehovah judges peoples not according to their religious creeds or ceremonial rites, but according to their acts.

VIII. **The Application to Northern Israel.** While his hearers were perhaps still dreaming of the glories of the coming day when Jehovah would destroy their foes and establish their world-wide dominion, like a flash came the application of the principles which they had so readily accepted for others. In a few incisive sentences Israel's guilt is laid bare. The typical crimes cited are not those of all members of

the nation, but of the rich and ruling class: the selling of a needy fellow-Hebrew into slavery, because he had nothing wherewith to pay a petty debt; the subverting of the cause of the poor in the public tribunal or through the misuse of authority; immorality, all the more loathsome because practised in the name of religion, as was the case in the prevailing Canaanite cults; the retaining of garments taken in pledge, which law and mercy commanded should be returned to those for whom they were the only bed at night; and carousals under the shadow of the sanctuary with wine extorted by injustice.

Then, in striking contrast to this dark picture of guilt and ingratitude, Amos recalls in rapid succession what Jehovah had done in the past for his people; how he had delivered them, a disorganized body of slaves, from the land of Egypt, and led them through the barren wilderness, had wrested the fruitful land of Canaan from the powerful Amorites, and had made it possible for the Israelites to enjoy their present prosperity. To train them by word and example, Jehovah had also sent them prophets and Nazirites; but they had influenced the Nazirites to break their vows, and the prophets they had silenced. Time and again Jehovah had pitied and pardoned his guilty people; but now for them there was nought but doom and the heavy burden of foreign conquest which would crush them as a heavily laden wagon crushes all beneath it. From this doom neither courage nor prowess nor flight could deliver. Thus the dauntless shepherd prophet shook, for the moment at least, the fatal apathy of the Northern Israelites, and impressed upon their unwilling minds his divine message of warning.

§ LXVII. THE FATAL ERRORS AND CRIMES OF THE ISRAELITES

1. Responsibility proportionate to opportunity (Am. 3 1, 2)

Hear this word
Which Jehovah hath spoken against you, O Israelites,
Against the whole race that I brought up from the land of Egypt:
You only have I known of all the races of earth,
Therefore will I visit upon you all your iniquities.

2. The law of cause and effect (3-6)

Do two walk together unless they be agreed?
Does a lion roar in the forest, when there is no prey for him?
Does a young lion cry out in his den, unless he has taken something?

Does a bird fall to the earth, if no bait is set for it?
Does a snare spring up from the ground, without catching anything?
Can a trumpet be blown in a city and the people not tremble?
Can calamity befall a city and Jehovah not have caused it?

Surely the Lord Jehovah doeth nothing,
Unless he revealeth his purpose to his servants the prophets.
The lion has roared; who does not fear?
The Lord Jehovah hath spoken; who can but prophesy?

3. Reason for the prophet's presence (7. 8)

Proclaim over the palaces in Ashdod:
Gather upon the mountain of Samaria,
And see the manifold tumults,
And acts of oppression in its midst;
For they know not how to do right,
They are heaping up violence and oppression in their palaces!
It is the oracle of Jehovah.

4. Samaria's astounding wickedness (9. 10)

Therefore, thus saith the Lord Jehovah,
An adversary shall surround the land,
And he shall strip from thee thy strength,
And thy palaces shall be plundered.
As a shepherd rescues from the mouth of a lion
Two shin-bones or a piece of an ear,
So shall the Israelites be rescued—
They who sit in Samaria on the corner of a couch,
On the damask of a divan!

5. The pitiless penalty (11. 12)

Hear and testify against the house of Jacob,
It is the oracle of Jehovah, the God of hosts,
That in the day when I visit the transgressions of Israel upon him,
I will also visit in judgment the altars of Bethel,
And the horns of the altar shall be cut off,
And they shall fall to the ground.
And I will smite the winter house, together with the summer house;

6. Temple, palace and hovel, all to be destroyed (13-15)

And the houses of ivory shall perish,
Yea, many houses shall be swept away.
It is the oracle of Jehovah.

7. Guilt of the wives (4 1)

Hear this word,
Ye kine of Bashan, who dwell in the mountain of Samaria
Who oppress the poor and crush the needy
Who say to your husbands, 'Bring that we may drink.'

8. Their pitiable fate (2. 3)

The Lord Jehovah hath sworn by his holiness:
'Behold, days are coming upon you,
When ye shall be taken away with hooks, even the last of you with fish-hooks,
And through the breaches shall ye go out, each woman straight before her,
And ye shall be cast toward Harmon,' is Jehovah's oracle.

9. Futility of ceremonial (4)

Come to Bethel and transgress,
At Gilgal increase your transgression;
And bring in the morning your sacrifices,
On the third day your tithes!

10. Its selfish motive (5)

And burn some leavened bread as a thank offering,
And proclaim aloud the voluntary offerings,
For you love to do so, O Israelites!
It is the oracle of the Lord Jehovah.

11. Failure to learn the lesson taught by famine (6)

But it was also I who gave to you
Cleanness of teeth in all your cities,
And lack of bread in all your palaces,
Yet ye have not returned to me, is the oracle of Jehovah.

12. By drought (7. 8b)

I, also, it was who withheld from you the rain,
And I sent rain upon one city,
While upon another I did not let it rain,
Yet ye did not return to me, is the oracle of Jehovah.

13. By blight and insect plagues (9)

I smote you with blight and mildew,
I laid waste your gardens and vineyards;

Your fig and your olive trees the young locust devoured;
Yet you did not return to me, is the oracle of Jehovah.

I sent among you a pestilence by the way of Egypt,
I slew your youths with the sword, taking captive your horses,
And I caused the stench of your camps to rise in your nostrils;
Yet ye did not return to me, is the oracle of Jehovah.

14. By pestilence and destructive war (10)

I wrought a destruction among you,
As God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah,
And ye were as a brand plucked from the burning;
Yet ye did not return to me, is the oracle of Jehovah.

15. By a great disaster (11)

Therefore thus will I do to thee, O Israel,
Because I am about to do this to thee,
Prepare to meet thy God, O Israel.
Jehovah, the God of hosts, is his name.

16. Doom impending over Israel (12. 13c)

Hear the word which I take up against you, even a dirge, O house of Israel:
Fallen, no more to rise, is the virgin Israel!
Hurled down upon her own soil she lies, with none to raise her!
For thus saith the Lord Jehovah:
The city that taketh the field with a thousand hath but a hundred left,
And the one that taketh the field with a hundred hath but ten left.

17. Overwhelming disaster impending (5 1-3)

For thus saith Jehovah to the house of Israel:
Seek me and live,
But seek not Bethel,
And Gilgal do not enter,
To Beersheba go not over;
For Gilgal shall taste the gall of exile,
And Bethel [House of God] shall go to perdition.

18. The true source of deliverance (4. 5)

19. Danger of not seeking Jehovah (6)

Seek Jehovah and live,
Lest he cast fire on the house of Joseph,
And it devour and there be none to quench it for Bethel.

20. Woe to the foes of justice (7. 10)

Alas for those who turn judgment to wormwood,
And cast righteousness to the ground,
Who hate him that reproves in the gate,
And abhor one that speaks uprightly!

21. Their punishment (11)

Therefore, because ye trample upon the weak
And take from him exactions of grain,
Houses of hewn stone have ye built,
But ye shall not dwell in them,
Charming vineyards have ye planted,
But ye shall not drink their wine.

22. Their judicial crimes (12)

Surely I know how many are your transgressions,
And how great are your sins!
Ye persecutors of the righteous, takers of bribes!
Yea, the needy in the gate they thrust aside!

23. Advice to the prudent (13. 14)

Therefore, since the prudent man at such a time keeps silent,
It is surely an evil time.
Seek good and not evil,
That ye may live.
That this Jehovah, God of hosts,
May be with you, as ye have said.

24. Hope for the honest man (15)

Hate evil and love good,
And establish justice in the gate;
Perhaps Jehovah will be gracious,
The God of hosts, to a remnant of Joseph.

25. The catastrophe about to overtake all classes (16. 17)

Therefore, thus saith Jehovah, the God of hosts:
In all squares there shall be wailing,
And in every street they shall say, 'Alas! Alas!'
And they shall summon the husbandman to mourning,
And to wailing those skilled in lamentation,

Yea, in all vineyards there shall be wailing,
When I pass through the midst of thee, saith Jehovah.

26. Horrors of the day of Jehovah to the guilty (18-20)

Alas, for those who long for the day of Jehovah!
What have you to do with the day of Jehovah?
It is darkness, and not light.
It is as when one flees from a lion,
And a bear falls upon him,
Or goes into the house and leans his hand upon the wall,
And a serpent bites him.
Shall not Jehovah's day be darkness and not light,
Yea, murky darkness without a ray of light in it?

27. Jehovah's rejection of mere ceremonialism (21. 22b. c-24)

I hate, I despise your feasts,
And I will not smell the savor of your festivals,
And with your cereal-offerings I will not be pleased,
And the peace-offerings of your fatlings I will not regard with favor.
Banish from me the noise of your songs,
For to the melody of your lyres I will not listen.
But let justice roll on as a flood of waters,
And righteousness like an unfailing stream.

28. Banishment of the nation that trusts in ceremonialism (25-27)

Was it only sacrifices and cereal offerings ye brought me
In the wilderness during forty years, O house of Israel?
But now ye shall lift up the shrine of your king,
And the image of your God which you have made for yourselves,
And I will carry you away into exile beyond Damascus,
Saith Jehovah, the God of hosts.

29. Woe to the irresponsible rulers (6 1. 3)

Alas for those who are careless in Zion
And overconfident on the mountain of Samaria!
Men of mark of the first of the nations,
To whom the house of Israel resort!
They who would postpone the day of calamity,
And yet have instituted a rule of violence!

30. Their selfish indulgence and debauchery (4-6)

They who lie on ivory couches,
And sprawl upon their divans,
And eat lambs from the flock,
And calves from out the stall;
They drawl to the sound of the lyre,
Like David, they devise for themselves instruments of song,
They drink bowlfuls of wine,
And anoint themselves with the finest of oil,
But they do not grieve over the ruin of Joseph.

31. Conquest and exile awaiting them (7. 8. 11b. c)

Therefore now they must go into exile at the head of the captives,
And hushed shall be the revelry of the sprawlers,
It is the oracle of Jehovah, the God of hosts.
Jehovah hath sworn by himself:
I abhor the pride of Jacob,
And his palaces I hate,
Therefore I will deliver up the city and all that is in it.
And one shall smite the great house into atoms
And the small house into fragments.

32. Folly of trusting their own strength (12. 13)

Do horses run upon crags?
Does one plow the sea with oxen?
That you turn justice into poison,
And the fruit of righteousness into wormwood?
Ye who rejoice in that which is not,
Who say, Have we not by our own strength taken horns for ourselves!

33. Approach of the Assyrian conqueror (14)

Verily, I am now raising up against you,
O house of Israel, a nation;
And they shall oppress you,
From the entrance of Hamath
Even to the brook of the Arabah,
Is the oracle of Jehovah, the God of hosts.

I. **The Literary Form of Amos's Prophecy.** The original prophecies of Amos fall naturally into three groups. The first contains a series of brief, forcible oracles of judgment, dealing with Israel's foes

and then culminating in the oracle regarding Israel herself (chaps. 1, 2). The second division, the main body of the book (3–6), is cast in the form of a judicial charge against the leaders of the nation. The prophet presents his own credentials, summons the heathen nations as witnesses against Israel, and then prefers the detailed charges against the guilty classes in the nation, supplementing these charges with argument, exhortation, lamentation and warning. Frequently the prophet takes up anew a familiar theme, expanding or emphasizing it. At times one may recognize the influence of his audience, and in some cases even their rejoinders to his bitter denunciations. Hence the thought does not run on uninterruptedly from premise to conclusion, but is characterized by a recurring cycle of woe, condemnation and doom.

The third division of the book (7–9) consists of a series of visions in which the note of judgment also prevails. Thus, in the three general divisions of the prophecy, the same fundamental teachings are repeatedly presented, although in very different literary form.

In the more argumentative passages the four- or five-beat measures are employed, as, for example, in $^{1-3,\ 7-8,\ 11-16}$ of the present section. Elsewhere the characteristic three-beat measure prevails. The parallelism of thought is carefully observed. There is also often a marked rhythmic parallelism between succeeding stanzas. The literary style is forceful, vigorous, logical and often impassioned. A great variety of figures are employed and most of them are drawn from nature and were suggested by Amos's shepherd experiences. These figures reveal a prophet of superlative poetic skill and originality, and are characterized by a literary finish and beauty which establish Amos's position as one of the greatest Hebrew masters of style. The literary form of his prophecies suggests that they were the product of careful thought and preparation, were shaped under the influence of the noblest poetic inspiration, and were probably later carefully revised, as the prophet returned to put them in written form in the quiet of his home at Tekoa.

II. **The Prophet's Credentials.** The setting of the present section is clearly the great festival at Bethel. The same hostile audience, made up of the rich and ruling classes of Northern Israel, confront the shepherd-prophet from Tekoa. Amos first takes up the objection, probably suggested by some one of his hearers, that Israel was the special object of Jehovah's care and protection, and therefore would not be left to suffer the same fate as her heathen neighbors. Like a flash comes the rejoinder, "Yes, you have been the most favored of all the nations, and

therefore, since you have been faithless to your responsibilities, you shall be the most severely punished."

Amos next answers the question, which was doubtless prominent in the minds of his hearers, "By what authority do you proclaim this message of doom?" His method is the same as that in his opening address. In a series of questions he leads his hearers to accede to the truth that no effect in nature is without its corresponding cause, and conversely that no cause fails to produce its corresponding effect. The application of this principle was obvious to even the dullest of Amos's hearers. The prophet's presence to deliver at the danger of his life an unpleasant message to Northern Israel pointed to some compelling cause. The only sufficient cause was that Jehovah, who always reveals in advance his purpose to his servants the prophets, had commanded him to go and speak. Having once heard the roar of the Assyrian lion, as it was about to leap, Amos the shepherd could not remain silent without uttering the cry of warning.

III. **The Crimes of the Ruling Classes.** It is significant that Amos nowhere speaks of the sins of the masses. In his great arraignment of Northern Israel, the acts of cruel oppression and the wealth secured by the king and nobles through violence and injustice rise up before his vision as witnesses whose testimony even their heathen neighbors can appreciate. The ancient principle, "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth," is evidently in his mind. They who have plundered others shall themselves in turn be plundered, and only a pitiable remnant shall survive. Palaces, hovels, and even the temples shall not escape the impending judgment.

From the nobles of Israel and their blood-bought luxury the prophet turns in hot indignation against their wives, whom he likens to the fat, sleek kine of Bashan, which in their pursuit of food stupidly and ruthlessly crush every humble flower or worm which may lie in their path. That they may secure the means to satisfy their own appetites these greedy women goad on their husbands to crush by oppression the poor and needy of the land. Before their startled eyes the prophet flashes the bold figure of a fisherman hauling out fish with the cruel hook, and declares that even so they will be dragged forth from their proud city as victims of the foreign conqueror.

IV. **The Uselessness of Mere Ceremonial.** Amos next deals with the popular fallacy that Jehovah desires sacrifice, not mercy. As he recalled the crimes against justice committed by the sanctimonious worshippers who stood before him, their proud ritual seemed to him

but hateful hypocrisy. With biting sarcasm he advises them to go on with their round of sacrifices, not because it secures Jehovah's favor but because they find in it pleasure and satisfaction. If they would but read the signs of the times, they could not fail to see how distasteful to Jehovah is all this ceremonialism.

Rapidly, in a series of balanced strophes concluding with the same powerful refrain, Amos refers to the calamities which had overtaken the nation within the memory of many of those who stood before him. Famine, drought, plague, pestilence, defeat at the hands of their enemies, disasters, even as great as those which overtook the wicked Canaanite cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, had swept over Israel. And yet these calamities, which even the heathen interpreted as a call to repentance, had not touched the heart of the proud, self-satisfied Israelites. Therefore nothing remains for Jehovah to do except to visit upon Israel its well-deserved doom. The indefiniteness of this doom added greatly to its impressiveness. In imagination the prophet already saw and pictured the effects of this imminent judgment. In the characteristic five-beat measure, in which the hired mourners in ancient Israel voiced their lamentation over the dead, he sings a dirge over the nation. Nothing more striking could be imagined than the contrast between the proud confidence of Israel's leaders and the prophet's crooning its death dirge in their presence.

V. **The Call to Repentance.** Amos's message from beginning to end was almost without exception that of condemnation and doom; and yet it is evident that his one supreme purpose was to save Northern Israel from the awful fate which he proclaimed with absolute conviction. He felt himself to be the watchman, who alone saw the approaching foe and was, therefore, called to sound the alarm that the nation might put itself in a state of defence. The sternness of his denunciation but reveals his passionate eagerness to save. The call to "seek Jehovah and live" expresses his ultimate conception of Jehovah as a God not merely of grim judgment but of tenderness and mercy, eager to forgive the guilty nation, if it would but turn to him in true repentance. The reëstablishment of the vital and personal relation between Jehovah and his people meant life. The refrain, "seek Jehovah and live," is therefore Amos's positive message to his race and to humanity.

VI. **Amos's Ideal of Righteousness.** Amos felt keenly the startling contrast between the elaborate ritual at the sanctuaries and the gross injustice in the public tribunals, in the market place, and in the court and palace. To him the palaces built by exactions and oppression

seemed but sepulchres. Unflinchingly, to their very face, he pronounced woes upon the nobles, the judges, and the rich who had built these palaces at the expense of the needy members of the community. They who were fondly waiting for the day of Jehovah and were expecting that it would prove a day of national victory and exaltation were following a grim spectre. Instead, it should be a day of judgment with no escape for the guilty. In the name of Jehovah, he declared that all the feasts and festivals and offerings with which they thought to buy divine favor, were only hateful to Jehovah. Israel's wilderness experience had proved that offerings were unnecessary to insure his care and guidance. Only justice, not meted out with scanty measure, but like a mighty flood, pervading palace and court and public tribunal, could win the divine favor which they craved.

VII. **The Impending Doom.** Amos concludes his sermon with a clear announcement of coming conquest and exile. Again his conclusions were based on the laws of cause and effect. Horses cannot run upon crags nor can one plow the sea with oxen; no more can men sin against the fundamental laws of the universe and expect that the results will be peace and strength. Already the inevitable consequences of Israel's crimes were beginning to appear: the rulers were incapable, the natural resources had been deflected for personal ends, the middle class had been reduced to servitude, there were no leaders to inspire public confidence and arouse patriotism, and the hope of the nation centred in mere material strength and a vain hypocritical formalism. In the presence of Assyria's armies, Israel's guilt and weakness were clearly patent to the mind of a keen observer like Amos; but to the majority of those to whom he spoke his words seemed but madness. In the face of these conditions, the prophet could predict only doom and disaster for the nation.

§ LXVIII. THE INEVITABLE CONSEQUENCES OF ISRAEL'S CRIMES

1. Jehovah's leniency in averting the locust plague (Am. 7^{1-3})

Thus the Lord Jehovah showed me,
And behold, he was forming locusts,
When the late spring grass began to come up.
And when they were making an end
Of devouring the vegetation of the land,
I said, O Lord Jehovah, forgive, I pray;
How can Jacob stand, for he is small?

Jehovah repented concerning this;
It shall not be, said Jehovah.

2. In averting the drought (4-6)

Thus the Lord Jehovah showed me,
And behold, he was giving command to execute judgment,
By fire—the Lord Jehovah.
And it devoured the great deep,
And had begun to devour the tilled land.
Then I said, O Lord Jehovah, cease, I pray;
How can Jacob stand, for he is small?
Jehovah repented concerning this;
Neither shall this be, said Jehovah.

3. The inevitable judgment awaiting Israel (7-9)

Thus the Lord showed me,
And behold the Lord was standing
Beside a wall, with a plumb-line in his hand.
And Jehovah said to me,
What dost thou see, Amos?
And I answered, A plumb-line,
Then the Lord said, Behold, I am setting a plumb-line
In the midst of my people Israel;
I will not again pass by them any more.
And the high places of Isaac shall be desolate,
The sanctuaries of Israel shall be laid waste,
And I will rise up against the house of Jeroboam with the sword.

4. Amaziah's message to the king (10, 11)

Then Amaziah the priest of Bethel sent to Jeroboam king of Israel, saying, Amos has conspired against you in the midst of the house of Israel; the land is not able to bear all his words. For thus has Amos said, 'Jeroboam shall die by the sword, and Israel shall surely be led away captive out of his land.'

5. His command to Amos (12, 13)

Also Amaziah said to Amos, O seer, go flee away to the land of Judah, and there eat bread and there prophesy; but you shall no longer prophesy at Bethel, for it is the king's sanctuary, and it is the royal residence.

6. Amos's reply (14, 15)

Then Amos answered and said to Amaziah, I was no prophet, nor a son of a prophet; but I was a shepherd and a dresser of sycamores when Jehovah took me from follow-

ing the flock, and Jehovah said to me, 'Go, prophesy against my people Israel.'

7. Fate of Amaziah and his class (16. 17)

Now therefore hear the word of Jehovah: 'Thou sayest, "Thou shalt not prophesy against Israel, nor preach against the house of Isaac," ' therefore thus saith Jehovah: 'Thy wife shall be a harlot in the city and thy sons and thy daughters shall fall by the sword, and thy land shall be divided by line; and thou shalt die upon an unclean soil and Israel shall surely be led away captive out of this land.'

8. Israel's ripeness for judgment (8 1. 2)

Thus the Lord Jehovah showed me,
And behold, a basket of summer fruit.
Then he said, What dost thou see, Amos?
And I said, A basket of summer fruit.
And Jehovah said to me,
The end has come to my people Israel,
I will not again pass them by.

9. The evidences of decay (4. 5. 6a)

Hear this, you who trample upon the needy,
And oppress the poor of the earth, saying,
When shall the new moon pass that we may sell grain,
And the sabbath that we may open the corn—
Making smaller the measure and enlarging the weight
And perverting the false balances—
And that we may sell the refuse of the corn?

10. Consequences of crime: earthquake (7. 8)

Jehovah hath sworn by the pride of Jacob,
Never shall I forget all their deeds!
For this shall not the land tremble,
And all her inhabitants mourn?
Shall not the whole of it rise like the Nile,
And sink like the Nile of Egypt?

11. Eclipse and pestilence (9. 3)

And it shall come to pass in that day,
It is the oracle of the Lord Jehovah,
That I will make the sun set at noon,
And darken the earth in broad day,
And the singing-women of the palace shall wail,
It is the oracle of the Lord Jehovah.
A multitude of carcasses! In every place they are cast!

And I will turn your festivals into mourning,
And all your songs into dirges,
I will bring upon all loins sackcloth,
And upon every head baldness,
I will make it like the mourning for an only son,
And the end of it like a bitter day.

12. Universal lamentation (10)

And I will send hunger in the land,
Not a famine of bread nor a thirst for water,
But for hearing the word of Jehovah.
Then shall they wander from sea to sea,
From the north to the rising of the sun shall they run to and fro,
To seek the word of Jehovah, but they shall not find it.

13. Absence of divine revelation (11b-12)

In that day shall faint
The fairest maidens and the youths,
Who swear by the guilt of Samaria,
And say, As liveth thy God, O Dan!
And as liveth thy patron, O Beersheba!
And they shall fall, no more to rise.

14. Destruction of the flower of the nation (13. 14)

I saw the Lord standing by the altar,
And he said, Smite the capitals that the thresholds may shake,
Yea, break them off upon the head of all of them,
And the rest of them I will slay with the sword,
Not one of them shall escape,
Nor shall a refugee be delivered from among them.

15. Destruction of sanctuary and people (9 1)

If they dig through to Sheol,
Thence will my hand take them;
And if they climb up to heaven,
Thence will I bring them down;
And if they hide themselves on the top of Carmel,
Thence will I search them out and take them.

16. Absolutely no escape from Jehovah (2. 3a. b)

And if they hide out of my sight at the bottom of the sea,
Thence will I command the sea-serpent to bite them;
And if they go into captivity before their enemies,

17. Retribution to overtake all (3c. d. 4)

Thence will I command the sword to slay them,
And I will keep my eye on them,
For evil and not for good.

18. Israel to be punished like the heathen (7. 8a. b)

Are ye not as the Cushites to me,
O Israel? is the oracle of Jehovah.
Did I not bring up Israel out of the land of Egypt,
And the Philistines from Caphtor, and Aram from Kir?
Behold the eyes of the Lord Jehovah are upon the sinful kingdom,
And I will destroy it from the face of the earth.

I. The Visions of Impending Judgment. It would seem that Amos, having exhausted the resources of exhortation, denunciation and warning, made a final effort by means of graphic word pictures, vividly and indelibly to impress his message upon the minds of the leaders of Northern Israel. The first picture was that of a dread locust plague sweeping over the land, just as the late spring grass was beginning to come up and just before the hot Palestinian summer began. Realizing that this plague meant want and starvation for man and beast, the prophet prayed that Jehovah would be merciful and pity the helpless nation, and his prayer was granted. Again he presents the vision of a fiery drought which destroyed even the perennial springs. Again the prophet petitioned for divine mercy, and his prayer was granted. In his third vision of the impending doom, Amos beheld Jehovah holding a plumb-line, the symbol of justice and rectitude, over the nation Israel. Appreciating the guilt and impenitence of his people and the futility of pleading for mercy in the presence of impartial justice, the prophet could do nothing but proclaim the devastating judgment which should soon sweep over sanctuary and palace, leaving all a desolate waste.

The meaning of these parables or visions is obvious. Repeatedly Jehovah has overlooked the crimes of his guilty people, and because of his mercy and love has delivered them from the judgments which they richly deserved; but "for three transgressions of Israel, yea for four, he could no longer revoke it." The guilt of the impenitent Israelites compelled Jehovah in justice to visit upon them such a signal calamity that they would be shaken from their blind, senseless self-confidence. For them, therefore, these visions meant simply a dramatic and impressive reiteration of his message of solemn warning. They also represent Amos's final appeal to the conscience of Northern Israel. Their

balanced literary form and their perfect adaptation to the situation and to the characteristics of the nation, indicate that they are the product of careful thought and elaboration. Each successive vision is in itself a complete picture—vivid, impressive, terrifying. They are akin to the acted prophecies of Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel. Their later counterpart is found in the marvellous parables of the New Testament.

II. **The Reception of Amos's Message.** Some later disciple of Amos has fortunately recorded the way in which his message was received by the chief priest of the royal sanctuary at Bethel. Amos's words were too true and too bold not to rouse bitter opposition. The sanctity of the person of the prophet and the fact that his words had been directed against the crimes of classes rather than of individuals had hitherto evidently deterred Amaziah from interposing. The reference, however, to the overthrow of the reigning house of Jeroboam was at once made the basis of a charge against Amos. The narrative would seem to imply that Jeroboam was then present at the royal sanctuary. Amaziah's charge was partially true and partially false; at least it represents a very free interpretation of Amos's words.

The king's answer is not recorded. Possibly Amaziah acted at his direction in expelling Amos from Bethel. The priest's words voice the arrogant contemptuous attitude of the corrupt rulers of that ill-fated northern kingdom. Amos naturally resented the implication that he was a mercenary prophet, prophesying, like the four hundred false prophets who gathered about Ahab (§ LXIV), not under the compulsion of divine conviction but for personal ends. He even went further and denied that he had any connection with the prophet class in Israel, and asserted that he was simply a plain humble laborer whom Jehovah called from his task to go and warn the nation Israel. Thus, almost unconsciously, every true prophet is born.

Like many a bold speaker of truth in later ages, Amos was silenced by the rulers whose crimes he denounced. As he departed, however, he uttered against Amaziah, who represented the religious leaders of the nation, a final prophecy which pictured in grim detail the fate that was soon to overtake not only the priest to whom it was addressed but also the rulers of Northern Israel.

III. **Amos's Conclusions Regarding Israel's Future.** The remaining visions in the book of Amos may have been uttered as the prophet retired from Bethel or may have been appended to the final collection of his prophecies. They constitute a fitting conclusion to the prophet's message. The vision of a basket of summer fruit represents

the nation as prosperous, attractive, but, like perishable summer fruit in a hot, oriental climate, on the eve of a rapid and complete decay. There is also a solemn play on the sound of the similar Hebrew words for summer fruit (*kăyic*) and end (*kēc*).

In the succeeding stanzas, Amos presents the causes and nature of the coming national decay: the greed and oppression of the ruling and merchant class and the lack of brotherly kindness. A fate, which he likens to the horrors of earthquake, eclipse and pestilence, shall quickly overtake the land, so that lamentation shall soon take the place of festal joys. The nation which has banished Jehovah's prophet shall soon feel a hunger for the word of Jehovah which shall know no satisfaction, and the cults of the ancient sanctuaries shall prove of no help or avail to their devotees in the hour of Israel's dire need. Indeed, upon the sanctuaries themselves and their vaunted sacrifices, the thunderbolt of Jehovah's wrath shall fall, smiting the temple and destroying the worshippers. None shall escape Jehovah's judgment. Even though they hide in the secluded caves of Carmel or seek refuge in the uttermost parts of the earth, Jehovah's vengeance will yet pursue them. Before Jehovah's tribunal heathen Cushites and Philistines and Israelites are judged alike; and Israel, being the most guilty, must suffer the most overwhelming fate.

IV. **The Later Appendix to the Book.** A later editor has added an appendix to the book of Amos (9^{9-15}), adapting it to the post-exilic point of view and presenting a glorious picture of restoration: but such promises in the mouth of Amos, as he stood before the defiant, guilty leaders of the nation, were impossible, and such predictions would have completely destroyed the effect of his courageous words of warning. They also speak of material prosperity and conquest; but Amos labored for something far more glorious—a nation ruled by the eternal principles of justice and of mercy toward all mankind.

V. **Amos's Conception of Jehovah.** Amos is primarily a social and ethical reformer. The principles which he proclaimed are to-day being recognized by all civilized nations whether Christian or pagan. And yet it was not an abstract ethical ideal which inspired him. The motive which determined all his activity was his conception of Jehovah and the deep sense of personal obligation to him. The God of Amos's prophecies is constantly called Jehovah of hosts. He it is who controls the forces of nature and his realm includes the earth, the great deep, and the heavens above. His authority was no longer limited to little Israel. The experiences and activities of the neighboring peoples, and

even of the distant Assyrians, were determined by him. The God whom Amos proclaimed was not apart from life, but was intimately interested and active in all the experiences of men.

In Amos's logical, judicial thought, the most prominent attribute of Jehovah was unquestionably justice. The situation in Northern Israel also compelled him to place all the emphasis upon the imminent divine judgment; but he also declared that Jehovah was a God of mercy, lenient toward the crimes of the heathen, listening to the petitions of his prophet, seeking by judgments and warnings to save his people from ultimate annihilation—a God not only of justice but of goodness.

VI. **Amos's Social Teachings.** Amos was the first great social reformer known to history. With the modern socialist he also had much in common. Probably he himself knew through painful personal experience the social evils of his day. He was the tribune of the poor and oppressed. The rich and the rulers and those in authority were the especial objects of his attack. By them he was silenced as a dangerous agitator and banished from the northern kingdom. He first of all the prophets committed his addresses to writing, and probably sent them forth as a tract that they might bear his message where he could not speak in person.

There is a sanity and a depth, however, in Amos's social teachings which make him the father, not of any one passing school of socialists, but of all true social reformers. The ultimate goal of his work was not to overthrow existing social and political institutions, but by means of fundamental reform to preserve and render them efficient. He offered no programme for the reorganization of society, but looked for its salvation through an intelligent and faithful recognition of individual and class responsibility. He did not attack wealth and authority, but rather their selfish and criminal misuse. He not only declared that public office and wealth are a public trust, but he also demanded in the name of Jehovah that justice and mercy should govern every man in his dealing with his fellows. Above all he declared that deeds of justice and love are the absolutely essential fruits of true religion and the only stable foundations upon which a state or society can be founded.

§LXIX. THE BEGINNING OF JEHOVAH'S REVELATION BY HOSEA

1. Hosea's marriage (Hos. 1 2. 3a)

Now Jehovah said to Hosea:
Go marry a wife with whorish instincts who will bear you children by her whoredom,
For the land is continually going a-whoring from after Jehovah.
So he went and married Gomer, the daughter of Diblaim.

2. Birth and name of his first son (3b-5)

And when she conceived and bore him a son, Jehovah said:
Call his name Jezreel,
For yet a little while,
And I will avenge the blood shed at Jezreel upon the house of Jehu,
And I will cause the kingdom of Israel to cease.
And it shall come to pass in that day,
That I will break the bow of Israel in the valley of Jezreel.

3. Of Lo-ruhamah (6)

And when she conceived again and bore a daughter, he said to him:
Call her name Lo-ruhamah [Unpitied],
For I will no longer
Have pity on the house of Israel,
That I should still spare them.

4. Of Lo-ammi (8. 9)

Then she weaned Lo-ruhamah; and when she conceived and bore a son, he said:
Call his name Lo-ammi [Not-my-people],
For ye indeed are not my people,
And I indeed am not your God.

5. Hosea's divorce of his unfaithful wife (2 2b. c. 4. 5a. b)

[Then Hosea said:
I will put away Gomer],
For she is not my wife,
And I will not be her husband;
And on her children I will have no pity,
Since they are children of whoredom,
For their mother hath become a harlot;
She who conceived them hath behaved shamefully.

But Jehovah said to me:
Still go, love this woman
Who loves a paramour and is an adulteress,
As Jehovah loveth the Israelites,
Although they turn to other gods,
And love raisin-cakes.

6. The divine promptings still to love her (3 1)

So I bought her to me for fifteen pieces of silver and eight bushels of barley and a measure of barley. And I said to her:

7. Her restoration and discipline (2. 3)

Many days shalt thou abide for me,
Thou shalt not play the harlot, and thou shalt not be any man's wife.
Yet, I on my part will be thine.
For through many days
The Israelites shall abide
Without king and without prince,
Without sacrifice and without pillar,
Without ephod and without teraphim.

8. Israel's similar experience (4)

Strive with your mother, strive,
That she put her acts of whoredom from her sight,
And her adulteries from between her breasts,
Lest I strip her naked,
And set her as she was on the day of her birth,
And make her like the wilderness,
And let her become like a parched land,
And let her die of thirst.
For she hath said,
I will go after my paramours
Who gave me my bread and my water,
My wool, my flax, my oil and my drink.

9 Jehovah's appeal to the Israelites to save their nation from apostasy (2 2a. d. e. 3. 5. c-e)

Therefore I am going to hedge up her ways with thorns,
And build a wall about her,
So that she cannot find her paths.
And she will pursue her paramours,
But will not overtake them,
And she will seek and not find them.
But she herself did not know
That it was I who gave her

10. Jehovah's discipline of Israel to make clear the folly of apostasy (6. 7a-c, 8a-c. 9. 10. 12. 11. 13)

The corn, the sweet wine and the oil.
Therefore I will take back my corn in its time,
And my sweet wine in its season,
And I will withdraw my wool and my flax,
Given to cover her nakedness;
And so I will uncover her shame,
And none shall deliver her out of my hand.
And I will lay waste her vines and her fig trees,
Of which she hath said, These are my rewards
Which my lovers have given me.
And I will make them a thicket,
And the wild beasts shall devour them.
And I will also cause all her mirth to cease,
Her feasts, her new moon and her sabbaths.
And thus will I visit upon her the days of the Baalim,
In which she made offerings to them,
And decked herself with ear-rings and jewels,
And went after her paramours
And forgot me, is the oracle of Jehovah.

11. Divine favor and reconciliation for penitent Israel (14-17. 19-20)

Therefore I am going to allure her,
And bring her into the wilderness,
And speak endearingly to her.
And I will give her from there her vineyards
And the valley of Achor as a door of hope,
And there she shall respond as in the days of her youth,
As when she came up from the land of Egypt.
And it shall be in that day, is the oracle of Jehovah,
She shall call to her husband,
And shall call no more to the Baalim.
And I will remove the names of the Baalim from her mouth.
And they shall no more be mentioned by their names.
And I will betroth her to me forever;
Yea, I will betroth her to me in righteousness,
And in judgment, and in kindness and in mercy;
Yea, I will betroth her to me in faithfulness and she shall know Jehovah.

And it shall come to pass in that day
That I will speak,—it is the oracle of Jehovah,—
I will speak to the heavens,
And they will speak to the earth,
And the earth will speak to the grain,
And the new wine and the oil;
And they shall speak to Jezreel,
And I will sow her in the land.
And I will have pity upon the Unpitied,
And I will say to Not-my-people, Thou art my people,
And they will say, Thou art my God.

12.The evidences of Jehovah's forgiveness and love (21-23)

I. **The Book of Hosea.** The book of Hosea falls naturally into two divisions. The first, chapters 1–3, tells of that tragic experience in Hosea's life which made him a prophet and of the way in which he applied his own experience in interpreting the relations between Jehovah and the nation Israel. The second division, chapters 4–14, consists of extracts from addresses which the prophet delivered during the latter part of his life. They deal with the grave political, social, moral and religious problems of his age. They lack the close-knit logical unity which characterizes the prophecies of Amos. They vividly reflect, however, the thought and activity of the prophet during the years of national decline, and the impassioned words of denunciation, warning and entreaty with which Hosea sought to turn his fellow-countrymen from their fatal course.

II. **Hosea's Date and Nationality.** The superscription to Hosea's prophecy makes him contemporary of Isaiah, and assigns to his work a period of nearly a century (782–686 B.C.). The exact date of his activity must, however, be determined from the historical references within the prophecy itself. His call and earlier sermons found in chapters 1–3 are evidently to be dated before the death of Jeroboam II in 740 B.C.; for he refers in them to the overthrow of the house of Jehu as still in the future.

The later sermons, chapters 4–14, reflect the period of anarchy and social and moral decay which followed soon after the death of Jeroboam. Since they contain no allusions to the invasion of Tiglath-pileser IV, in 734 B.C., but rather imply that the territory of Gilead, which was then annexed to Assyria, still belonged to the northern kingdom, their date is established between 740 and 735 B.C. Hosea, therefore, began his work during the same decade as did Amos, and labored, as the super-

scription implies, contemporaneously with the earlier period of Isaiah's activity.

Unlike Amos, Hosea was a native of the northern kingdom. This conclusion is established not only by the fact that practically all of the historical and geographical allusions are to places and events in Northern Israel, but also by that deep love and devotion for the larger Hebrew kingdom which Hosea betrays in his every utterance. Hosea is the one prophet of the north whose sermons have been preserved. Regarding the last days of Northern Israel, biblical historians are almost silent; but in the utterances of its noblest patriot it is possible to study as an eye-witness the forces which were rapidly carrying the nation on to its final destruction.

III. **The Prophet's Private History.** The first and second chapters of Hosea's prophecy have evidently been reëdited by a later disciple who has added the appropriate sub-title, "The Beginning of Jehovah's Revelation by Hosea." In the third chapter the prophet's experiences are told in the first person; but in the opening chapters his words have been incorporated in a framework in which the prophet is spoken of in the third person. In the second chapter also the account of his own personal experience, which binds together the narrative of the first and third chapters, has apparently been blended with one of Hosea's sermons, in which he traces the close analogy between his own experience with his unfaithful wife, Gomer, and Jehovah's experience with faithless Israel. Separating the narrative material of chapter 2 and introducing the sermon contained in that chapter in its logical position after chapter 3, a clear and consistent record of Hosea's early life is secured.

Briefly, but plainly, Hosea tells of the tragic domestic experience which opened his eyes to the appreciation of those fundamental truths which made him a prophet. Looking back from the vantage point of later years, he realized that the strong love which he had felt for Gomer the daughter of Diblaim, and all the pain which his marriage with her had brought to him, were not without their profound significance and permanent value. Dean Plumptre, in his poem, "Gomer" (in *Lazarus and Other Poems*), has nobly and truly voiced the feelings with which Hosea interpreted his early history.

"Through all the mystery of my years,
There runs a purpose which forbids the wail
Of passionate despair. I have not lived
At random, as a soul whom God forsakes;

But evermore His Spirit led me on,
Prompted each purpose, taught my lips to speak,
Stirred up within me that deep love, and now
Reveals the inner secret."

Later events had disclosed the base character of the woman who had commanded his youthful affection; but even as he rose above the ruins of his home and his fond ambitions, Hosea could declare in the light which the painful experience brought him, that in it all God was leading him on to his true life-work.

IV. **The Unfaithfulness of His Wife.** In his earliest recorded prophetic utterance, Hosea reiterated the message of Amos to Northern Israel. That message was impressed upon the mind of his fellow-countrymen by the name which he gave to his oldest son. Jezreel was the plain on which Jehu, the founder of the reigning house, had slain his predecessor and thus become king of Israel. The name recalled Jehu's bloody acts, and was interpreted by Hosea as a symbol of the coming judgment in which Northern Israel should pay with its life-blood for the crimes of the past. His little daughter also received the grim name, "Unpitied." When it became known on the streets of Hosea's native town, the prophet declared that it was intended to symbolize the ominous truth that, although Jehovah had long overlooked the crimes of the nation, he would no longer spare. The name of his youngest son, "Not-my-people," proclaimed the same sad fact that Jehovah would soon be compelled to reject his people.

The note struck in these early prophetic oracles is harsh and repellent, and perhaps suggests the bitterness in the prophet's soul, as he recognized in his own domestic experiences the hideousness and awful consequences of sin. When he discovered that his wife, Gomer, was unfaithful, Hosea was justified by ancient Semitic custom and Hebrew law, in driving her from his home and thus severing the marriage bond. This would seem to have been his first impulse, and was in perfect keeping with his stern judicial spirit revealed in the child-oracles.

The context implies that the impulse still to love and redeem the fallen woman who had wronged him so bitterly, came to Hosea only after he had already banished her or else she herself had fled from his home. At least he states that he bought her back from her life of ignominy and servitude for the price of a slave, and thus brought her again to his home. Immediate restoration to the former marriage relation was impossible. In silence and alone she must learn to appreciate the enor-

mity of her guilt and the depth and greatness of the love which had followed her even in her shame. Whether or not she met Hosea's love with true contrition and appreciation is not stated. The decision rested with her; for in the narrative Hosea stands waiting, the faithful lover, ready to forgive, when once penitence and contrition had done their purifying work.

V. **The Truths which Hosea Learned from His Tragic Experience.** It is evident that Hosea told of his own private experience with the same purpose that influenced Isaiah and Jeremiah to recount the profound spiritual experiences which marked the beginning of their prophetic work, namely, that their own disciples and readers might appreciate their aims and teachings. The minds of these later prophets were opened by a study of the conditions and needs of their race and by the remarkable crisis through which their nation was passing. Hosea's mind was divinely enlightened and his will was stirred to action by the tragic experiences which came to him in his domestic life. These taught him: (1) That having once truly loved his wife, he could not cease to love her, however much she sinned. (2) That the more he loved her the greater was the pain which her sin brought to him. (3) That in the presence of defiant wrong-doing, discipline is the noblest expression of love, for it alone will develop penitence in the heart of the guilty. (4) That forgiveness is impossible without penitence on the part of the sinner. (5) That he who loves truly is ever eager to forgive the penitent sinner.

These simple but profound truths lie at the foundation of all of Hosea's subsequent teaching. These convictions, won through infinite pain, and appreciated as no man had appreciated them before, made him not merely the prophet of stern justice but also the prophet of divine love and tenderness. Henceforth his task was to denounce the sins of Israel, for he now understood, as no one else, what they meant to Israel's God. But his greater task was to reveal to the nation the Infinite Love which had guided them in their past and was ready and eager to forgive all the guilt of the present, if only they would reach out toward it with true repentance and contrition.

VI. **The Application of his Own Experience to that of His Nation.** In the account of his own experience, Hosea traces the close analogies between his relation to his wife Gomer and Jehovah's to the nation Israel. Even as Hosea wooed and married Gomer, so Jehovah, back in the wilderness days, entered into solemn covenant relations with Israel. As Hosea had been faithful to Gomer through all

the years and loved her still, even so Jehovah had shown his unceasing love for Israel; but as Gomer had been faithless to Hosea and had bestowed her affection on her paramours, even so Northern Israel had turned to the worship of the ancient Canaanite Baalim. In the case of both Gomer and Israel, love and kindness had failed to evoke a corresponding love and fidelity. Hence, as Hosea had learned from his own experience, love must now find expression in discipline.

With impassioned words, he pleads, in the name of Jehovah, with the citizens of Northern Israel, that they appeal to the nation, their mother, to repent and turn from her criminal course. In her blind folly Israel has regarded Jehovah's blessings of plenty and prosperity as the gifts of the local gods of fertility. Only as the nation is deprived of them and covered with humility and shame will she learn the true source of these blessings.

It is not certain that the closing paragraphs of this section are from Hosea, although on the whole they come most naturally from his lips. In any case they represent the conclusion suggested by his own personal experience. The object of his discipline of Gomer was that he might rouse within her that repentance which would make forgiveness and reconciliation possible. Jehovah's withdrawal of plenty and prosperity from the nation was that the people of Israel might turn to him with that penitence which would make it possible for him again to bestow upon the nation the evidences of his favor. Even as in the days of the settlement, the valley of Achor, which had witnessed the punishment of the nation because of the sins of Achan (*cf.* § XXXII[10]), had proved the gateway through which the Hebrews had entered into the possession and enjoyment of the blessings of the land of Canaan, so now, if the nation would but learn the lesson of divine discipline, the experience would open to them new revelations of Jehovah's care and love. When once the nation should break with the Baal cults of Canaan and give its undivided love to Jehovah, he would renew, on the basis of the eternal principle of righteousness, justice and mercy, the old, close covenant between himself and his people. Then the heavens, as Jehovah's messengers of love, would send down their fructifying rains upon the earth and the earth would send forth its rich products, so that Jezreel would no longer symbolize coming judgment, but rather, as its name suggests, represent the land which "God sows." Then the unpitied people should be the object of Jehovah's pity; they who had been rejected should again be called the people of Jehovah, and they in turn should recognize him as the one and only God.

VII. **Hosea's Message to the World.** In the pathetic story of his own experience and of its application to his nation, the prophet Hosea laid the eternal foundations of all true religion. He has also given the clearest and most vivid presentation of the divine necessity of repentance found in pre-exilic Hebrew literature. Interpreted into universal terms, Hosea's message was: (1) Jehovah is a God of infinite love and demands in turn not only the loyalty but the love of his people. (2) The sin and infidelity of man bring infinite pain to the eternal heart of God. (3) Even for God himself forgiveness of the impenitent is impossible. (4) Toward those who are defiantly impenitent, divine justice and its expression in discipline is the supreme evidence of love. (5) That which is called divine judgment and punishment is but a means to an end, and that end is forgiveness and reconciliation. (6) God is ever ready to forgive even the most guilty, provided only they come to him with true contrition. (7) The goal of all life and human experience is that perfect peace and happiness which come through harmony with the eternal Father.

§LXX. JEHOVAH'S CHARGES AGAINST GUILTY ISRAEL

1. General arraignment of the nation (Hos. 4 1-3)

Hear the word of Jehovah, O Israelites,
For Jehovah hath a charge against the inhabitants of the land,
For there is no fidelity nor true love
Nor knowledge of God in the land;
But perjury, lying and murder,
Stealing, committing adultery and deeds of violence,
And acts of bloodshed quickly follow each other.
Therefore the land mourns,
And all its inhabitants languish,
Together with the wild beasts and the birds of the heavens;
While even the fish of the sea are swept away.

2. Responsibility of the priests (4-6)

Yet let none bring charges,
And let none reprove,
Since my people are but as their priestlings.
O priest, thou shalt stumble by day,
And the prophet also shall stumble with thee;

By night I will destroy thy people.
Thy people are being destroyed for lack of knowledge.
Because thou hast rejected knowledge
I reject thee from being priest to me.
Since thou hast forgotten the instruction of thy God,
I also will forget thy children.

3. Priests and princes betrayers of the people (5 1-3)

Hear this, O priests!
And hearken, O house of Israel!
O house of the king, give heed!—
Since for you is the judgment.
A snare have you become at Mizpeh,
And a net spread out on Tabor,
And a deep pit have they dug at Shittim,
And there is no correction for any of them.
I indeed know Ephraim,
And Israel is not hid from me.
For thou, O Ephraim, hast played the harlot;
Israel is defiled.

4. Israel's fitful, superficial repentance (5 15–6 3)

I will return to my place,
Until they are confounded and seek my presence.
When they are in distress they will quickly seek me,
Saying, 'Come let us return to Jehovah,
For he hath torn and he will heal us,
He hath smitten and he will bind us up,
He will revive in a couple of days,
On the third he will raise us up again,
That we may live in his presence.
Yea, let us know, let us eagerly seek to know Jehovah;
As soon as we quickly seek him,
Then he will come to us as the winter rain,
As the spring rain that waters the earth.'

5. The fatal lack of true love and knowledge (4 6)

What can I make of you, O Ephraim!
What can I make of you, O Israel!
Since your love is like a morning cloud,
Yea, like the dew which early goes away.
Therefore I have hewn them by the prophets,
I have slain them by the words of my mouth.

And my judgment is like the light that goes forth,
For it is love that I delight in and not sacrifice,
And knowledge of God and not burnt-offerings.

6. Israel's hideous crimes (7-10)

But they after the manner of men have transgressed
the covenant;
There they have played me false.
Gilead is a city of evil-doers
Tracked with bloody footprints;
And as bandits lie in wait for a man,
So a band of priests murder on the way to Shechem;
Verily they commit deliberate crime!
In Bethel I have seen a horrible thing,
There Ephraim plays the harlot;
Israel is defiled.

7. Crimes that preclude forgiveness (6 11b–7 2)

When I would turn, when I would heal Israel,
Then Ephraim's guilt is revealed,
And Samaria's crimes are seen:
How they practice fraud and the thief enters in,
While abroad bandits plunder.
But they never think in their hearts
That all their wickedness I remember.
Now their deeds have encompassed them;
They are ever before my face.

8. Corruption of the court (3-7)

In their wickedness they anoint kings
And in their falsehood princes,
Since they are all of them adulterers.
They make our king sick,
And the princes with fever from wine;
He stretches forth his hand with dissolute fellows.
For like an oven their heart burns with treachery;
All night their anger slumbers;
In the morning it blazes into a flame of fire.
All of them glow like an oven,
And they devour their rulers;
All their kings have fallen,
There is none among them who calls to me.

Ephraim—he lets himself be mixed among the peoples.
Ephraim—he has become a cake unturned.
Strangers have devoured his strength, but he does not know it;
Also gray hairs are sprinkled upon him, but he knows it not,
And Israel's pride has testified to his face.
Yet they do not return to Jehovah their God,
And in all this they seek him not.

9. Israel's sad degeneracy and stupidity (8-10)

Ephraim is like a simple, silly dove;
To Egypt they call, after Assyria they go.
As often as they go away, I will spread over them my net,
Like birds of the heavens I will bring them down;
I will chastise them because of their wickedness.
Woe to them, that they have strayed from me!
Destruction to them, because they have been untrue to me!

10. Its foolish, faithless foreign policy (11-13)

Although it was I who redeemed them, they spoke lies about me,
And they have never cried to me with their heart.
But they are ever howling beside their altars for corn and new wine;
They cut themselves, they rebel against me,
Although it was I who trained and strengthened their arms;
Concerning me they plan only evil, they turn to Baal,
They have become like a bow that swerves.

11. Its treachery and rebellion (14. 15)

They themselves have made kings but without my consent;
They have made princes but without my knowledge.
Out of their silver and gold they have made idols to their destruction!
Mine anger is kindled against them.
Thy calf, O Samaria, is distasteful;
A workman made it and it is no god.
Like splinters shall Samaria's calf become.

12. Its men-made kings and idols (8 4. 5b. c. a. 6b.c)

13. Its fatal foreign relations (7-9b)

For they sow the wind and reap a whirlwind;
A shoot which has no stalk and yields no fruit!
If it should yield, strangers would devour it.
Israel is devoured; already it is among the nations
As a vessel in which there is no pleasure.
For by themselves they have gone up to Assyria
As a wild ass which goes apart by itself.

14. Early nobility and later idolatry of the Israelites (13 1, 2)

When Ephraim used to speak there was trembling;
A prince was he in Israel.
But he incurred guilt through Baal and died.
And now they go on sinning;
They make for themselves molten gods—
From their silver, idols according to their own model;
Smiths' work, all of it!
To such they speak!
Men who sacrifice, kiss calves!

15. Sudden fate impending (3)

Therefore they shall be like the morning cloud,
Like the dew that early disappears,
Like the chaff which blows away from the threshing-floor,
And like the smoke from the window.

16. Their forgetfulness of Jehovah's care (4-6)

Yet it was I, Jehovah, thy God,
Who brought thee up from the land of Egypt,
And a God beside me thou knowest not,
Nor has there been any saviour except me.
It was I who shepherded thee in the wilderness,
In the land of burning heat.
As they fed, they were filled to the full;
They were filled to the full so that their heart was lifted up;
Therefore they forgot me!

17. Jehovah's vengeance (7, 8)

And so I will be to them like a lion,
Like a leopard will I lay in wait by the way;
I will fall upon them like a bear robbed of its young,
And will tear open that which encloses their hearts,
And there the lions of the forest shall devour them,
And the wild beasts shall tear them in pieces.

In the time of destruction, O Israel, who will help thee? 18. None to deliver (9-11)
Where is thy king now, that he may deliver thee?
And all thy princes that they may secure for thee justice?
Those of whom thou hast said,
'Give me kings and princes.'
I give thee kings in my anger
And take them away in my wrath.

Ephraim's iniquity is gathered up, his sin is laid by in store. 19. Unfitted to meet the coming crisis (12. 13)
The pangs of childbirth come upon him, but he is an unwise child;
For this is no time to stand in the mouth of the womb.

Shall I deliver them from the power of Sheol? 20. Left by Jehovah to their fate (14)
Shall I redeem them from death?
Come, on with thy plagues, O death!
On with thy pestilence, O Sheol!
Repentance is forever hid from mine eyes.

Though he is flourishing in the midst of the reed grass, 21. The prey of foreign invaders (15)
There shall come an east wind, Jehovah's wind,
Coming up from the wilderness;
And his fountain shall dry up,
And his spring shall be parched;
While the foe shall strip the treasure
Consisting of all precious things.

Samaria shall bear her guilt 22. Guilty Samaria's fate (16)
For she has rebelled against her God.
They shall fall by the sword,
Their children shall be dashed to pieces
And their women with child shall be ripped up.

I. The Background and Literary Form of Hosea's Later Prophecies. When the strong hand of Jeroboam II was relaxed by death, there came a sudden and radical change in the character and fortunes of Northern Israel. Zechariah, Jeroboam's son, was killed by an assassin after a reign of only six months. Within a month the assassin was in turn put to death by a certain Menahem who instituted a reign of terror, ignominiously buying immunity from Assyrian attack by the

payment of an enormous tribute which he extracted from the wealthy men of his kingdom. Almost instantly the evils which Amos had detected and denounced became glaringly apparent: the lack of a broad and consistent national policy, class hatreds, the oppression of the weak by the strong, and a form of religion which was but a cloak for loathsome acts of cruelty, oppression and immorality.

It is not strange that Hosea's sermons during this period are filled with bitter denunciations. His words are those of a patriot whose heart was breaking as he saw rulers and people deliberately committing crimes which were rapidly hurrying the nation on to its final destruction. One recognizes in the abrupt, epigrammatic, almost explosive style of these sermons the pent up emotion and the intense feeling under which they were uttered. The great thoughts that filled his soul were expressed most naturally in abrupt, jagged, forceful figures, which call for keenest attention and thought on the part of the reader, but leave an impression on the mind that never vanishes.

In his use of literary figures, as well as in his message, Hosea is the most original of all the Hebrew prophets, and yet he is to-day one of the least read and understood. This neglect is partially due to the ruggedness and obscurities of his style. The text of the prophecy has also suffered greatly in the process of transmission. Many of his allusions are to events otherwise unrecorded in Israel's history, so that the modern reader constantly finds himself baffled by his ignorance of the facts to which the prophet alludes. And yet of all the prophets Hosea best rewards careful study. In the text adopted above most of the passages containing the obscure allusions have been omitted, and those which represent best the prophet's teachings and activity during the years of Israel's rapid decline have been selected.

II. **The Guilt of Israel's Prophets, Priests and Rulers.** Hosea, like Amos, opens the main body of his addresses with a sweeping arraignment of the nation. The prophet, as the spokesman for the plaintiff, Jehovah, states in detail the crimes of which the people of Israel are guilty. Honesty, love and the knowledge of God are lacking, and in their place are hideous crimes condemned by the moral code of any race or age.

With true insight Hosea states that the responsibility for Israel's guilt lies, however, not primarily with the common people but with the leaders of the nation, the priests and the prophets, who in failing faithfully to instruct the people have proved their misleaders. The political leaders, also, are intent only on luxury and debauchery. Little won-

der, therefore, that the people who follow their example are corrupt. Priests, prophets and rulers prey upon the people and are so blind to all warnings or corrections, that they make it impossible for Jehovah to deliver the guilty nation.

III. **The Fatal Lack of True Repentance and Character.** In his own private experience, Hosea had learned how necessary was repentance, and that true repentance meant far more than mere words and a shrinking from the consequences of one's evil acts. With pathetic sarcasm he describes, in the form of a dialogue between the people and Jehovah, the false popular conception of repentance. To the prevailing belief that no fundamental reform is required, but that all that is necessary in a time of disaster is to turn for help and deliverance to the God of their nation, comes Jehovah's pathetic rejoinder:

> What can I make of you, O Ephraim,
> What can I make of you, O Israel?

Israel's love and repentance are, alas, like the fleecy morning clouds, utterly lacking in content and permanence. By the fearless, unsparing words of his prophets Jehovah has endeavored to instil in the minds of the people a true conception of his demands and to make clear to them the crime and folly of their acts. By severe and startling judgments he has endeavored to impress upon them his supreme teaching:

> It is love I delight in and not sacrifice,
> And knowledge of God and not burnt-offering.

Yet through all their history the Israelites have disregarded their most solemn obligations. Falsehood, murder, highway robbery, instigated by the very priests who were charged with the task of guarding the law and of teaching the people what is right, unspeakable crimes, even at the ancient sanctuary of Bethel, apostasy and gross immorality, testify to the need of a fundamental change of heart and reveal the insufficiency of that superficial repentance with which the people think to win Jehovah's favor. Jehovah is eager to forgive; but how can he when he is confronted at every turn by public and private crimes. In commercial and civic life men defraud and steal under the guise of law or authority, while on the throne of Israel itself there sits a dissolute, drunken king (probably Menahem or his son Pekahiah), surrounded by a group of cutthroats, sharing his debauchery and shame, seeking only a favorable

opportunity to wield the sword of the assassin; while not one of them thinks for a moment of turning to Jehovah in penitence or for guidance.

IV. **The Evidences of National Degeneracy.** In a series of remarkable passages, Hosea, with the intimate knowledge of a patriot and the inspired insight of a prophet, diagnoses Israel's malady. His favorite designation of Northern Israel is by the name of the larger and leading tribe, Ephraim. With deep yearning and sorrow he pronounces the name of his beloved nation, and then with unshrinking courage and thoroughness proceeds in a few epigrammatic words to characterize the evils which are proving its destruction.

As a clear-eyed, fearless statesman, he declares that one of the fundamental mistakes in Israel's policy is its vacillating foreign alliances. Ephraim is like a cake unturned—burnt on the one side, raw on the other. No consistent policy nor trust in Jehovah binds together all parts of the nation. Instead, it is so dominated by foreign customs and ideas that its true character and strength remain undeveloped. Already the signs of national decay are beginning to appear; but, saddest of all, the nation is ignorant of its actual condition. Like a silly dove, they make alliances, first with their betrayers, the Egyptians, and then with the Assyrians, their deadliest foes; but they never turn with true faith and contrition to the God who has tenderly cared for them through all their past. Thus they compel Jehovah, whose heart burns to deliver them, to become instead their harsh judge and to execute the sentence which he is forced to pronounce upon them. Instead of trusting Jehovah, they put their faith in the kings whom they have raised up without the divine approval, and in the idols of silver and gold which they have set up as the objects of their worship. Thus in their blindness they are sowing the wind and shall soon reap a whirlwind.

V. **Hosea's Attitude Toward the Kingship and Idolatry.** Hosea puts himself on record as absolutely condemning the kings of Northern Israel, not because he was opposed, as were certain of his later spiritual disciples, to the institution of the kingship itself, but rather because he realized that the type of men who ruled over Northern Israel were foes to its best interests. With his clear spiritual and ethical vision, he also saw that the images of wood overlaid with silver and gold, which had been tolerated by the earlier prophets even in the temple at Jerusalem and in the sanctuaries of Dan and Bethel, were harmful rather than helpful to the cause of true religion. He therefore openly declared that the sooner they are chopped up by the hands of foreign conquerors the better for Israel's faith.

THE INEVITABLE FATE AWAITING THE NATION

VI. **The Inevitable Fate Awaiting the Nation.** Hosea, like Amos, after his searching diagnosis of the maladies of Northern Israel, saw no hope of the nation's ultimate recovery. Already the process of dissolution had begun. The strong and influential position which Israel enjoyed in the days of Jeroboam II had been lost. Saddest and most significant of all, the nation had no strong virile religious faith to give strength and consistency to its political policy, to bind together all classes in the community, to arouse the rulers to unselfish and patriotic activity, and to guide the nation through its present and future perils. Thus, Jehovah, who stood ready and eager to deliver a truly penitent people, was compelled to become the agent of Israel's destruction. Hence, as a prophet who faithfully interpreted existing conditions and tendencies, Hosea, though with breaking heart, was forced to proclaim to this nation, while it remained in its attitude of defiant unrepentance, an unmitigated message of doom.

§ LXXI. JEHOVAH'S TENDER LOVE FOR HIS PEOPLE

1. Jehovah's love and Israel's infidelity (Hos. 11 1, 2)

When Israel was young, then I began to love him,
And out of Egypt I called his sons.
The more I called them
The further they went away from me.
They kept sacrificing to Baalim
And making offerings to images.

2. His tender care and guidance of the race (3, 4)

Yet it was I who taught Ephraim to walk,
Taking them up in my arms;
But they did not know that I healed them.
With humane cords I ever drew them,
With bands of love.
And I was to them as one who lifts up the yoke from off their jaws,
And bending toward them, I gave them food to eat.

3. The punishment that Israel deserves (5-7)

They must return to the land of Egypt,
Or Assyria will be their king;
For they have refused to return to me.
Therefore the swords shall whirl in their cities,
And shall devour in their fortresses;

For my people are bent in rebelling against me,
And upon the Baalim they call with one accord.

4. The promptings of the divine heart of love (8. 9)

How can I give thee up, O Ephraim! how can I give thee over, O Israel!
How am I to give thee up as Admah! make thee like Zeboim!
My heart asserts itself;
My sympathies are all aglow.
I will not carry into effect the fierceness of my anger;
I will not turn to destroy Ephraim.
For God am I, and not man,
Holy in the midst of thee, therefore I will not consume.

5. The prophet's exhortation (14[1. 2a. b])

Return, O Israel, to Jehovah thy God;
For thou hast stumbled through thine iniquity.
Take words with thee,
And return to Jehovah thy God.

6. People: pity and pardon (2c-c. 3e)

Say to him:
Do thou wholly pardon iniquity and let us receive favor;
And thus we will pay the fruit of our lips;
For in thee the orphan finds mercy.

7. God alone can save (3a-d)

Assyria will not save us;
We will not ride upon horses [to Egypt];
And we will no more say, 'Our God,'
To the work of our hands.

8. Jehovah's response: full pardon (4. 5a)

I will heal their apostasy,
I will love them freely,
Now that my anger is turned away from them
I will be as dew to Israel.

9. Superlative prosperity (5b-6)

He shall blossom as the lily
And he shall strike in his roots like Lebanon.
And his saplings shall spread out,
And his beauty shall be like that of the olive tree.

They shall return and dwell in my shadow,
And they shall live well watered like a garden,
And they shall sprout like the vine.
Their renown shall be like that of the wine of Lebanon. 10. Reconciliation and renown (7)

Ephraim—what more hath he to do with idols!
It is I [Jehovah] who respond to him and look after him.
I am like an evergreen cypress;
From me is thy fruit found. 11. Divine provision for every need (8)

I. **The Revelation of Jehovah's Love in the Past.** For a prophet like Hosea the announcement of doom could not be his only or final message to the race. Beyond and above the errors and crimes and infidelity of the present, he clearly saw a divine love which never ceased and which was ever eager to find expression not in discipline and judgment, but by conferring peace and joy and prosperity. In the classic eleventh chapter of his prophecy, Hosea interprets Israel's past as it had never been interpreted before: Jehovah's loving care for his people began with this period of the Egyptian bondage. From that time through all their history, at every hour of need, Jehovah had been present to help his people. As a father teaches a little child to walk, so Jehovah instructed the infant nation. When they fell and suffered calamity, he gathered them up in his arms and comforted them. Not by discipline and stern compulsion, but by loving deeds and gentle persuasion he sought to guide his people in the way they should go. When they were wearied by the heavy burdens of life, Jehovah, like the humane ox-driver, at the first favorable moment released them from their burdensome but necessary yoke, and gave them that food which was needed to revive their strength.

II. **God's Passionate Desire to Forgive.** Yet Hosea could not forget that from their earliest history the Israelites had been blind and unappreciative. The more glory and prosperity Jehovah bestowed upon them, the more they turned, in their ignorance and thoughtlessness, to the worship of heathen gods. Their history had been one long, sad record of apostasy and ingratitude. In view of all their opportunities and enlightenment their guilt was as great as that of the ancient Canaanite cities in the Jordan plain, and merited a like punishment.

And yet, as Hosea contemplated the awful judgment, his heart was overwhelmed with a wave of divine pity. Through his lips Jehovah's overmastering love for his people asserts itself, even in opposition to the

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demands of strict justice. The infiniteness of the divine love, in contrast to that of finite man, stands clearly revealed. Even in the face of Israel's guilt and ingratitude, Jehovah's divine pity compels him to give Israel still another opportunity to turn from its mistakes and crimes.

III. **The Prayer of True Repentance.** The authorship of the last chapter of Hosea has been questioned by recent commentators. By many it is now regarded as a later addition by a spiritual disciple of Hosea, for it seems to destroy the force of the prophet's previous warning. Its theme of repentance is, however, that which is most characteristic of Hosea's message as a whole. In the form of a dialogue between the nation and Jehovah, it puts on the lips of the people the prayer of contrition which the prophet was eager to have them utter. The words of Jehovah express in the highly figurative, poetic language, what would be his glad response to a true prayer of penitence and faith.

The opening stanza contains the prophet's call to the nation to repent, and introduces the prayer which he would thus teach his nation to pray. The sole basis of the petition is Jehovah's readiness to show mercy to those who come to him in need of help. The petitioners bring him no sacrificial offering, but words of penitence and a frank confession of the mistakes of the past. At last they had learned that alliances with Assyria and Egypt could not help them; no longer would they pay homage to heathen idols; but in their deep humility and need they simply crave Jehovah's pardon.

IV. **The Divine Response.** The God who is revealed by the response is the God proclaimed by Hosea. Jehovah promises not only to forgive but to heal the effects of their long years of apostasy and to love them with a love which only the Infinite Father can bestow. Now that it is unnecessary for him to express his love in stern discipline, he will confer upon them the rich material blessings which he, as the God of nature, is able to command. Healed of their diseases and sins and restored to Jehovah's favor, the nation shall rapidly develop in character and strength. The memory of the days when Ephraim worshipped idols shall be like a hideous nightmare; for now the nation shall find in Jehovah the satisfaction of its every desire. Like the ever-green cypress, the perennial symbol of life and life-giving power, Jehovah will overshadow and guard his people.

V. **Hosea's Personality.** The sermons of Hosea reveal one of the most marvellous personalities in all history. Perhaps the most striking characteristic is its remarkable combination of strength and tender-

ness, of courage and sensitiveness, of knowledge and intuition. No patriot ever denounced the leaders and crimes of his nation with more vigor and fearlessness. With all the vehemence and boldness of Amos, he pointed out the inevitable consequences of the acts which were being committed by the men to whom he spoke face to face. His analysis of the political and social conditions of his day reveals an astonishing blending of scientific accuracy and acumen with inspired insight. His intimate acquaintance with the history and literature of his race indicates that Hosea was a keen student of the past as well as the present. It is clear, therefore, that, measured by the broadest standards, he was one of the best educated men of his day; but unlike Amos, he appears to have been familiar with literature, as well as with life.

The other deeper and still more attractive qualities in Hosea's character were developed, not from contact with books or with men, but in the painful school of affliction. He who had loved so intensely and unselfishly, was able, as no man before him, to appreciate the nature of God's infinite love. He who had loved deeply one who had sinned had learned to know what pain sin brought to the one who loved the sinner. He had also learned in the hour of his affliction what it was to turn to God for help and what the consciousness of God's love meant. Religion was for him the commanding factor in all life; and in his thought and teaching the centre of all religion and the universe was a God of love. From this point of view alone is it possible to understand Hosea and his universal message. Having received this heavenly vision, he saw all else in new and true proportions.

VI. **Hosea's Teachings Regarding God.** Hosea's theology was exceedingly simple because he stood so near to the heart of God. The divine justice, which Amos had emphasized so strongly and so truly, became in the light of Hosea's broader vision but the expression of divine love in dealing with ignorant, defiant sinners. Like all the prophets, he found no blind chance ruling in the affairs of men. For him there were only two forces in all the universe: the one was love—divine in its origin and effects; the other was sin, whether born of human ignorance or deliberate wrong-doing. The history of the past was but a record of God's endeavor, through the varied experiences of life and by a gradual process of training, to free men from the bondage of sin and to lead them into intelligent appreciation of his loving character and purpose.

Hosea was also the first to appreciate fully that the development of the perfect nation or the perfect man was a gradual, educational process.

The people "were being destroyed for lack of knowledge" and the priests were denounced because they had "rejected knowledge and forgotten the instruction of their God." Repeatedly Hosea seemed to say, If men but knew God and the real nature of his demands, to sin would be impossible.

While Amos appears to have condemned the forms of religious worship as useless, Hosea denounced the religious formalism of his day simply because it was misdirected. For him true religion and the worship of Jehovah was the mainspring of all human activity. Israel was drifting on to its ruin because it lacked an intelligent, commanding faith. The heinous social and moral crimes of his day he traced to the same lack in the lives of his fellow-countrymen.

With his supreme conception of God's character and purpose, it was also inevitable that Hosea should paint true and glorious pictures of the future. The sin and disasters of the present, he taught, were but passing. The real life of men was destined to be far different. Health and peace and material well-being, as well as the higher spiritual blessings, were the ultimate goal toward which God was leading mankind.

VII. **Hosea's Place Among the World's Religious Teachers.** Measured in the light of his times and by his influence upon the prophets who succeeded him, Hosea was the most original and constructive of all the religious teachers who appeared before the exile. The prophet Isaiah constantly draws inspiration from his impassioned words. Jeremiah not only reiterates his teachings, but also frequently uses Hosea's striking figures. The II Isaiah builds his magnificent teachings squarely on the foundations laid by Hosea. Hosea's condemnation of the worship at the local sanctuaries and his supreme doctrine of love and kindness toward man and all of God's creatures, reappear in many of the enactments found in the prophetic law-book of Deuteronomy. His teachings regarding the love of God, the character and effects of sin, the necessity of repentance, God's readiness to forgive, and the duty of love and kindness from man to man, are the essence of that gospel which Jesus proclaimed to all the world. Like the great Teacher of Nazareth, Hosea's method was positive. Although he could, when occasion demanded, bitterly denounce the existing evils, he ever held up before his people the positive goal, the fulness of life, that perfect harmony which will prevail when God's loving will is done on earth as it is in heaven.

§ LXXII. THE FATE OF NORTHERN ISRAEL

In the thirty-eighth year of Azariah king of Judah, Zechariah the son of Jeroboam began to reign in Samaria, and he reigned six months. And he did that which displeased Jehovah, as his fathers had done; he did not depart from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat with which he led Israel into sin. And Shallum the son of Jabesh conspired against him, and put him to death in Ibleam and became king in his place. 1. Zechariah's policy and death (II Kgs. 15 8-10)

Shallum the son of Jabesh, began to reign in the thirty-ninth year of Uzziah king of Judah; and he reigned one month in Samaria. Then Menahem the son of Gadi went up from Tirzah and came to Samaria and put Shallum the son of Jabesh to death in Samaria, and became king in his place. Now the other acts of Shallum and his conspiracy which he made, are already recorded in the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel. 2. Menahem's conspiracy (13-15)

Then Menahem smote Tappuah, and all who were in it and in its entire territory from Tirzah on; because they did not open the gates to him he smote it, and all the women in it with child he ripped up. 3. His cruelty (16)

During his days Pul [Tiglath-pileser IV] the king of Assyria, invaded the land. And Menahem gave Pul a thousand talents of silver, that he might help him to establish his sway over the kingdom. And Menahem commanded all Israel, even all the men of wealth, to give to the king of Assyria each fifty shekels of silver. So the king of Assyria turned back and remained no longer in the land. 4. Tribute to Tiglath-pileser (19-20)

Now the other acts of Menahem and all that he did, are they not recorded in the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel? And Menahem slept with his fathers, and Pekahiah his son became king in his place. 5. His death (21)

In the fiftieth year of Azariah king of Judah, Pekahiah the son of Menahem became king over Israel in Samaria, and reigned two years. And Pekah the son of Remaliah, his captain, conspired against him and smote him in Samaria in the castle of the royal palace; and with him were 6. Pekah's conspiracy (22. 25. 26)

fifty Gileadites; and he slew him and became king in his place. Now the other acts of Pekahiah and all that he did are already recorded in the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel.

7. His policy (27) In the fifty-second year of Azariah king of Judah, Pekah the son of Remaliah began to reign over Israel in Samaria and reigned twenty [two] years.

8. Assyrian conquests (29) During the days of Pekah king of Israel Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria came and captured Ijon, Abel-beth-maacah, Janoah, Kedesh, Hazor, Gilead, and Galilee, all the land of Naphtali, and carried their inhabitants captive to Assyria.

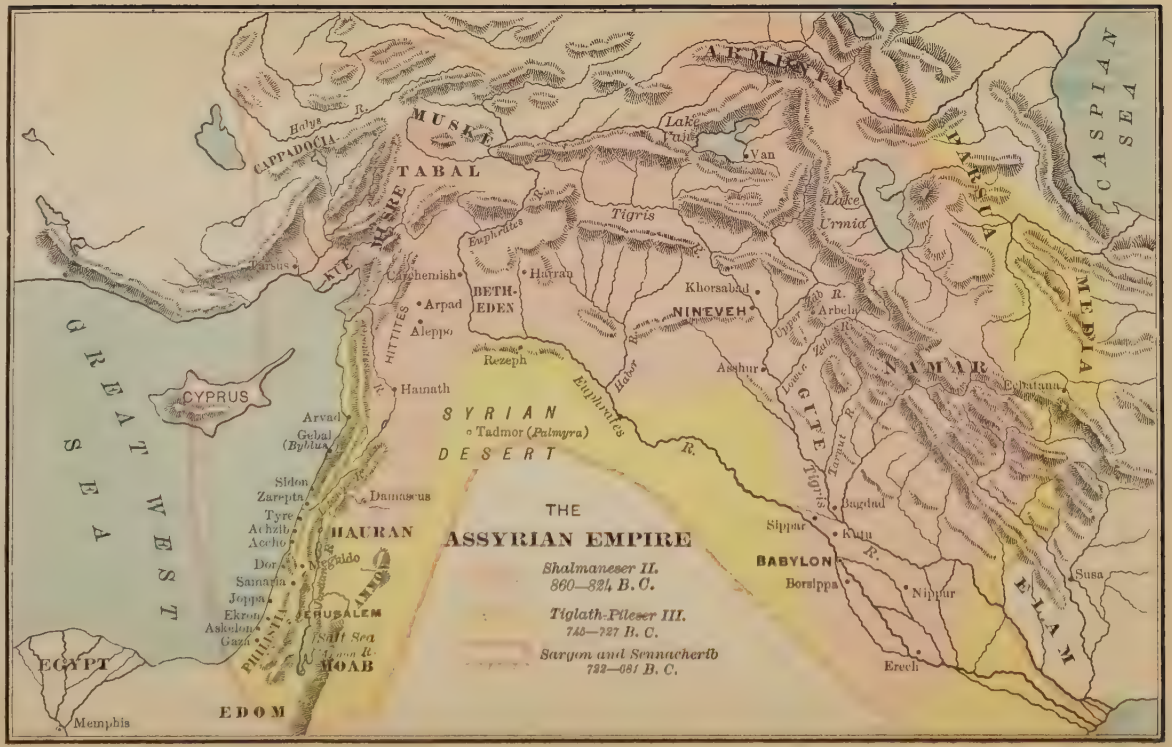
9. Hoshea's conspiracy (30. 31) Then Hoshea the son of Elah made a conspiracy against Pekah the son of Remaliah and put him to death and became king in his place in the twentieth year of Jotham the son of Uzziah. Now the other acts of Pekah and all that he did are already recorded in the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel.

10. His submission (17 1. 3) In the twelfth year of Ahaz king of Judah, Hoshea the son of Elah began to reign in Samaria over Israel and reigned nine years. Against him came Shalmaneser king of Assyria; and Hoshea became subject to him and brought him tribute.

11. His later rebellion (4) But when the king of Assyria found Hoshea guilty of conspiracy—for he had sent messengers to Sewe king of Egypt and brought no tribute to the king of Assyria, as he had done each year before—the king of Assyria shut him up and confined him in prison.

12. Final fall of Samaria (18 9-11) In the fourth year of Hezekiah—that is the seventh year of King Hoshea the son of Elah of Israel—Shalmaneser king of Assyria came up against Samaria and besieged it. At the end of three years they conquered it; in the sixth year of Hezekiah—that is the ninth year of Hoshea king of Israel—was Samaria captured. And the king of Assyria carried the Israelites away captive and placed them in Halah and on the Habor, the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes.

13. Foreign colonists (17. 24) Then the king of Assyria brought people from Babylon, Cuthah, Avva, Hamath, and Sepharvaim, and settled them instead of the Israelites in the cities of Samaria. And they took possession of Samaria and dwelt in its cities.


THE
ASSYRIAN EMPIRE
Shalmaneser II.
860—824 B. C.
Tiglath-Pileser III.
745—727 B. C.
Sargon and Sennacherib
722—681 B. C.
GREAT WEST SEA
CASPIAN SEA
ARMENIA
MUSKE
TABAL
CAPPADOCIA
Halys R.
Lake Van
Van
Lake Urmia
PARSUA
MEDIA
Tigris
Euphrates
Tarsus
KUE
Carchemish
Harran
BETH-EDEN
Arpad
Aleppo
HITTITES
Rezeph
Khorsabad
NINEVEH
Upper Zab R.
Arbela
Lower Zab R.
NAMAR
Ecbatana
Asshur
Habor R.
GUTE
Tarnut R.
Tigris R.
Bagdad
Sippar
Kutu
BABYLON
Borsippa
Nippur
Erech
ELAM
Susa
CYPRUS
Hamath
Arvad
Gebal (Byblus)
SYRIAN DESERT
Tadmor (Palmyra)
Sidon
Zarepta
Tyre
Achzib
Accho
Dor
Samaria
Joppa
Ekron
Askelon
Gaza
PHILISTIA
Damascus
HAURAN
Meghido
JERUSALEM
Salt Sea
Arnon R.
MOAB
EDOM
EGYPT
Memphis

Now at the beginning of their dwelling there they did not revere Jehovah. Therefore Jehovah sent lions among them, which were continually killing some of them. So when it was told the king of Assyria, saying, The nations which you have carried away and settled in the cities of Samaria do not know the law of the god of the land; therefore he hath sent lions among them, and now they are slaying them because they do not know the law of the god of the land, the king of Assyria gave command, Carry thither one of the priests whom I brought from there; and let him go and dwell there and let him teach them the law of the god of the land. So one of the priests, whom they had carried away from Samaria, came and dwelt in Bethel and taught them how they should revere Jehovah.

14. Their religious worship (25-28)

But each of the peoples had made gods of their own and set them up in temples of the high places which the Samaritans had made, each people in their cities in which they dwelt: the men of Babylon had made an image of Succoth-benoth, and the men of Cuth had made Nergal, and the men of Hamath had made Ashima, and the Avvites had made Nibhaz and Tartak; and the Sepharvites burnt their children in the fire to Adrammelech [Adar is king] and Anammelech [Anu is king] the gods of Sepharvaim. But when they began to revere Jehovah they made for themselves from their own number priests of the high places, who sacrificed for them in the temples of the high places. Thus, while they revered Jehovah, they also served their own gods, after the manner of the nations from which they had been carried away. To this day they do according to the earlier custom. So while these peoples revered Jehovah, they also served their graven images; their children likewise, and their children's children—as did their fathers, so do they to this day.

15. Their mixed heathen and Jehovah religion (29-34, 41)

I. **The Invasion of Tiglath-pileser IV.** The fundamental weakness and decay in Northern Israel were revealed, as Amos and Hosea had predicted, when Assyrian armies began to overrun Palestine. Tiglath-pileser IV, who is designated in the biblical narrative by his Babylonian name Pul (*Pulu*), injected new energy into the Assyrian empire. He rose as the champion of the agricultural classes against the cities

and against the priests who had largely absorbed the wealth and resources of the empire. Tiglath-pileser not only founded a new dynasty but widely extended the territory and prestige of Assyria in the north and west. In 738 B.C., almost before Hosea had ceased speaking, Assyrian armies invaded Northern Israel. Menahem saved his kingdom from attack by accepting the rule of Assyria and by paying an exceedingly heavy tribute.

In submitting so readily to the Assyrians, Menahem and his son Pekahiah were evidently regarded as traitors by the majority of the Israelites. The burden of the foreign tribute, which rested chiefly on the men of wealth, was exceedingly onerous, so that when Pekah, a certain Gileadite, rose (about 736 B.C.) against the house of Menahem and slew Pekahiah, he met with little opposition. The new king joined with Resin, king of Damascus, in forming a coalition against the Assyrians (*cf.* for a fuller statement of conditions in Judah, § LXXVI). This conspiracy, however, soon drew the armies of Tiglath-pileser to Palestine. The territory of Damascus was overrun, and in 732 B.C. this proud rival of Northern Israel was completely crushed by the Assyrians. In 734, during the same campaign, Tiglath-pileser invaded and conquered the territory of Northern Israel as far as the Jordan and the plain of Esdraelon, annexing it to the great empire. The Assyrian king also states that "the house of Omri—the whole of its inhabitants, together with their possessions I deported to Assyria. Pekah, their king, I slew. Hoshea I appointed over them. Ten [talents of gold, one thousand talents of silver] I received from them."

II. **The Reign of Hoshea and the Fall of Samaria.** The biblical narrative states that before Tiglath-pileser had completed the conquest of Northern Israel, a certain native Israelite, Hoshea, conspired against Pekah. Evidently as a reward for slaying the rebel Pekah, Hoshea was made vassal king of the little province of Samaria. For six years the Assyrian tribute was faithfully paid, but at last the anti-Assyrian feeling in Samaria, Tyre and in other Palestinian cities influenced him to rebel. The Egyptians also, who dreaded their eastern rival Assyria, were ever eager to incite the intervening states of Palestine to rebellion. The hope that the Egyptians would deliver them alone explains the folly of the Israelites in daring to defy the power of Assyria. Egypt, however, proved of no avail before the Assyrian army which soon shut up Hoshea in his capital Samaria. Owing to the natural strength of this northern capital and the desperation of its defenders, they were able to maintain the siege for three years. Before Samaria fell, late in 722 B.C., a new

king, Sargon, came to the throne of Assyria. He, however, carried on energetically the foreign policy of his predecessors, and Samaria was annexed to the Assyrian empire.

III. **The Fate of the Northern Tribes.** Sargon, the conqueror of Samaria, has given in his annals a very definite statement regarding the fate of the conquered: "In the beginning of my reign and in the first year of my rule . . . I besieged Samaria and conquered it. Twenty-seven thousand, two hundred and ninety of its inhabitants I carried into captivity; fifty of their chariots I carried away from there [to add to] my royal fighting force. . . . I restored it again and gave it more population than formerly. I settled there people from the lands that I had conquered. I appointed my officers as governors over them. Tribute and customs, like those of the Assyrians, I imposed upon them."

The policy of deporting rebellious peoples and settling them in distant parts of the empire was instituted by Tiglath-pileser IV. Its object was to remove the leaders, both civil and religious, and all who might be active in stirring up future rebellions, and thus to insure the complete submission of the people who were left behind. The biblical narrative suggests that the deported Israelites were settled at three different points. Halah has not yet been identified. Habor, in the province of Gozan, was one of the northern tributaries of the Euphrates in southern Mesopotamia. The territory of the Medes was to the north and northeast of Assyria.

In the light of these facts and the familiar history of the Samaritans, it is clear that the popular modern tradition that the ten tribes of Israel were lost is entirely without foundation. The small groups of nine or ten thousand colonists, which were settled in different parts of the Assyrian empire, were doubtless in time assimilated by the different peoples among whom they settled. The racial instinct and the popular faith of Israel were not at this time sufficiently strong to preserve the integrity of these widely scattered groups of exiles. If any did remain loyal to their race and religion, they probably found their way in time back to Israel or else assimilated with the later Judean exiles. The twenty seven thousand, two hundred and ninety captives, who, according to the annals of Sargon, were transported at this time, constituted only a small fraction of the total population of Northern Israel. The greater captivity had come in 734 B.C., when Tiglath-pileser IV conquered northern and eastern Israel as far south as the plain of Esdraelon. But even though the leaders were deported, the peasants and common people remained to till the land and occupy the cities.

IV. **The Origin of the Samaritans.** The biblical narrative states that Sargon brought colonists from Babylonia and other parts of his empire to take the place of the leaders who had been deported from the province of Samaria. Babylon and Kutu, and possibly Sippar on the middle Euphrates, may be identified as the cities from which these colonists were brought. Another band of captives from Hamath in northern Syria was also brought at this time to Samaria. Ezra $4^{2.\ 10}$ speaks of colonists introduced by the later Assyrian kings, Esarhaddon and Ashurbanipal. Sargon also refers to a rebellion in 720 B.C., two years after the fall of the city, in which the people of Samaria participated. It is probable, therefore, that the colonists mentioned in the biblical narrative were not all imported at once but at different times during the next two or three decades.

Although Northern Israel ceased henceforth to be an independent state and was merged into the Assyrian empire, the older Hebrew population remained and soon assimilated the foreign colonists. The biblical narrative states that in time the foreign colonists themselves desired to worship the God of the land, and that a Hebrew priest was sent to instruct them in the religion of Jehovah. The later history of the Samaritans indicates clearly that Jehovah continued to be worshipped at the high places in the north. The blending with the foreign cults was easy because the popular religion of Jehovah in the north at this time still retained many of the old heathen ideas and institutions. As the biblical historian states, this blending with the foreign religions gave to the faith and customs of the Samaritans many heathen elements which they long continued to retain.

The mingling with foreign blood also affected the character of the Samaritans themselves. The primary aim of the Assyrians was realized; for at this time the spirit of the Northern Israelites was broken. Before the many conquerors, who in succeeding ages swept over Palestine, the Samaritans, as a rule, readily submitted and thus escaped the rigors of siege and bloody conquest. The result was that they prospered under foreign dominance, while the power of their Jewish kinsmen to the south was repeatedly broken. These facts doubtless explain why through all the ages the Samaritans have survived. A little group of them, less than a hundred, still live together at Nablus, the ancient Shechem, under the shadow of their sacred mountain Gerizim, and worship Jehovah as did their ancestors at the same holy site. Of all the many petty peoples which lived in Palestine in ancient times, they alone remain.

V. Causes of the Downfall of Northern Israel. The fall of Northern Israel was far more than a fulfilment of the predictions of Amos and Hosea. Indeed, if the aims for which these prophets so earnestly labored had been realized, the northern, like the southern kingdom, would have survived the Assyrian crisis through which each was passing. Rather, the fate of Israel was a signal demonstration of the truth of the political, social and moral principles which their faithful prophets had proclaimed. Viewed in the broad perspective of history, it is clear that the final catastrophe came, as the prophets had predicted, because the nation lacked responsible and patriotic leaders, a stable and wise foreign policy, and sympathy and coöperation between class and class. The degenerate Canaanite cults had sapped the mental, physical and moral vigor of the race. No strong national religion united and inspired rulers and people. Like a silly dove, they trusted to foreign alliances which only involved them deeper in the Assyrian net. The result was that in the end their weak, vacillating policy cost them their national life; for instead of consistently bowing before the Assyrian storm to rise again, as did most of the other nations of Palestine, they brought down upon themselves the severest punishment that the cruel Assyrians were able to administer.

VI. **Northern Israel's Contributions to the Faith of Mankind.** The two centuries which intervened between the division of the Hebrew empire and the fall of Samaria are among the most important in the religious history of the race, and chiefly so because of the activity of the three or four great prophets of the north. It was in the north that the prophets occupied by far the most prominent position. Its freer, more democratic atmosphere doubtless offered a less restricted field for their work; but, above all, it was in the north that the great political, social and religious crises first developed and called forth the intrepid heralds of Jehovah.

Following Elijah's epoch-making declaration that Jehovah demanded the whole worship of his people and the resulting prophetic reformation led by Jehu, an unknown prophet or group of prophets began, about the middle of the eighth century, to write the great prophetic history which begins with the call of Abraham and ends with the establishment of the kingdom under Samuel. One recognizes throughout the Northern Israelite history the influence of such commanding personalities as Elijah and Elisha. In it the prophets are represented as overshadowing from the first all other leaders, and as directing at each step the destinies of the chosen people. In this picture of the past the prophets present

their conception of what that history ought to have been and thus vividly illustrate those ideals which they were seeking to impress upon their contemporaries. Like Hosea, they bring out in sharp contrast the eternal antithesis between Jehovah's gracious purpose for his people and the stubbornness and ingratitude and sin of the Israelites. These early prophetic historians regard the local high places, such as Bethel and Gilgal, the altars and pillars and ceremonial customs, which had survived from the Semitic past, as not only legitimate but essential to worship. These prophetic narratives also reflect the prevailing popular beliefs that Jehovah had in the past and would in the future care for his people as the gods of the other nations cared for their followers.

The advent of the Assyrians disclosed the insufficiency of the old popular conception of Jehovah. If Jehovah were simply the God of Israel, then he was either weaker than the gods of Assyria or else did not care to exert himself to deliver his people. Either possibility begat doubt and apostasy. If Jehovah could not or would not deliver his people, it was natural and inevitable that they should turn to the worship of the strongest deity. The only hope that remained for those who cherished the old popular faith was that by added gifts and offerings they might purchase Jehovah's favor and induce him to perform, if he could, some miracle in their behalf. It is obvious from the sermons of Hosea that, in the presence of this great crisis, Israel's faith was on the verge of collapse.

The supreme miracle of Israel's history is that out of this period of overwhelming doubt there arose certain men like Amos and Hosea, whose faith was strengthened rather than daunted by the problems of the hour, and who beheld with clear vision, not a God weak or capricious who ruled as merely the champion of little Israel, but one supreme God of justice and love, who absolutely and justly controlled the forces of nature as well as the affairs of men. They recognized that the impending advance of Assyria was not because Jehovah was powerless or regardless of the fortunes of his people; it was rather because of Israel's deep-seated guilt. They appreciated the necessity for some great revolutionizing experience which would turn the people from their apostasy and crimes to the recognition of the character and demands of the one true God who had ever guided them from the first and had in store for them a destiny, if they were but prepared for it, far more glorious than popular poet had ever pictured. Assyria, therefore, was, in their eyes, Jehovah's agent, not of mere judgment, but of that discipline which was necessary before Israel would be prepared for the noble destiny which awaited it.

In the stress of their own personal and national experiences, Amos and Hosea likewise saw clearly the insufficiency of the popular religion and ceremonial formalism of their day. The God of justice and love whom they beheld could not be worshipped or pleased by mere forms and sacrifices. Hence they proclaimed the immortal truth, which humanity has been so slow to accept, that justice and mercy and love toward God and man are the only gifts which will win the divine favor.

The Northern Israelites as a whole failed utterly to respond to the plain, convincing appeals of their noblest prophets. Hence the nation lost its life, as Amos and Hosea had predicted. A few thoughtful souls doubtless paid heed, and in their own spiritual experience realized, in the face of public and private disaster, the truth of the words which the prophets had proclaimed. Northern Israel lost its life, but Judah became the heir of its rich spiritual heritage, and preserved and transmitted it, so that to-day that exalted ethical spiritual monotheism, first revealed to a few earnest men and by them flashed before the bewildered vision of the corrupt rulers and leaders of Northern Israel, has become the possession and inspiration of all mankind.

THE ASSYRIAN PERIOD OF JUDAH'S HISTORY

§ LXXIII. FROM REHOBOAM TO AHAZIAH

1. Rehoboam's reign (I K. 14 21)

Now Rehoboam, the son of Solomon, became king in Judah. Rehoboam was forty-one years old when he began to reign, and he reigned seventeen years in Jerusalem, the city which Jehovah had chosen out of all the tribes of Israel to put his name there. And his mother's name was Naamah the Ammonitess.

2 Heathen practices (22-24)

And Judah did that which displeased Jehovah, and they aroused his anger with the sins which they committed, more than all that their fathers had done. They also built for themselves high places, pillars, and asherahs, on every high hill and under every green tree. There were also sacred prostitutes in the land. They did according to all the abominations of the nations which Jehovah drove out before the Israelites.

3. Shishak's plunder of temple and palace (25-28)

Now in the fifth year of King Rehoboam Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem. And he took away the treasures of the temple of Jehovah and the treasures of the royal palace—he took all away. He also took away all the shields of gold which Solomon had made. And King Rehoboam made in their place shields of brass and gave them into the charge of the commanders of the guards, who kept the door of the royal palace. And as often as the king went into the temple of Jehovah, the guards took them and brought them back into the guard-room.

4. Civil war (30. 31)

And there was war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam continually. And Rehoboam slept with his fathers and was buried with his fathers in the city of David. And Abijam his son became king in his place.

5. Abijam's reign (15 1. 2. 7b. 8)

Now in the eighteenth year of King Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, Abijam began to reign over Judah. Three years he reigned in Jerusalem; and his mother's name was

Maacah the daughter of Abishalom. And there was war between Abijam and Jeroboam. And Abijam slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the city of David. And Asa his son became king in his place.

6. Asa's religious reforms (9-13. 15)

In the twentieth year of Jeroboam king of Israel Asa began to reign over Judah. And he reigned forty-one years in Jerusalem; and his mother's name was Maacah the daughter of Abishalom. And Asa pleased Jehovah, as did David his father. And he put away the sacred prostitutes from the land, and removed all the idols that his fathers had made. And he also removed Maacah his mother from being queen-mother, because she had made a horrible image as an asherah. And Asa cut down her horrible image, and burnt it in the Kidron Valley. Also he brought into the temple of Jehovah the votive gifts his father consecrated and his own votive gifts—silver, gold, and vessels.

7. Asa's purchase of the aid of Aram (16-22)

And there was war between Asa and Baasha king of Israel all their days. And Baasha king of Israel went up against Judah and fortified Ramah, so as not to allow any one to go out or in to Asa king of Judah. Then Asa took all the silver and the gold that were left in the treasures of the temple of Jehovah and the treasures of the royal palace, and entrusted them to his servants. And King Asa sent them to Ben-hadad the son of Tabrimmon, the son of Hezion king of Aram, who dwelt at Damascus, with the statement, There is a league between me and you and between my father and your father; herewith I send you a present of silver and gold. Break your league with Baasha king of Israel, that he may withdraw from me. And Ben-hadad listened to King Asa and sent the commanders of his armies against the cities of Israel, and smote Ijon, Dan, Abel-beth-Maacah, and all Chinneroth, together with all the land of Naphtali. And as soon as Baasha heard of it, he abandoned the fortifying of Ramah and returned to Tirzah. Thereupon King Asa made a proclamation to all Judah—none was exempted—that they must carry away the stones of Ramah and the timber with which Baasha had fortified it; and with these King Asa fortified Geba of Benjamin and Mizpah.

8. Asa's illness and death (23. 24)

Now the other acts of Asa and all his brave deeds and the cities which he built, are they not recorded in the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah? But in his old age he became diseased in his feet. And Asa slept with his fathers and was buried with his fathers in the city of David his father. And Jehoshaphat his son became king in his place.

9. Jehoshaphat's good policy (22 41-44)

And Jehoshaphat the son of Asa began to reign over Judah in the fourth year of Ahab king of Israel. Jehoshaphat was thirty-five years old when he began to reign, and he reigned twenty-five years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Azubah, the daughter of Shilhi. And he walked altogether in the way of Asa his father; he did not turn aside from it, doing that which pleased Jehovah. Only the high places were not taken away, but the people still sacrificed and burnt their offerings on the high places. And Jehoshaphat made peace with the king of Israel.

10. His wars and reforms (45. 46)

Now the other acts of Jehoshaphat and his brave deeds that he did, and how he made war, are they not recorded in the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah? Also the rest of the sacred prostitutes, who remained in the days of his father Asa, he expelled from the land.

11 Ahaziah's policy and alliance (II K. 8 25-29a)

In the twelfth year of Joram the son of Ahab king of Israel, Ahaziah the son of Jehoram king of Judah began to reign. Ahaziah was twenty-two years old when he began to reign, and he reigned one year in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Athaliah the granddaughter of Omri king of Israel. And he walked in the way of the house of Ahab and did that which displeased Jehovah, as did the house of Ahab; for he was related by marriage to the house of Ahab. And he went with Joram the son of Ahab to make war against Hazael king of Aram at Ramoth in Gilead. But the Arameans wounded Joram. Then King Joram returned to be healed in Jezreel of the wounds which the Arameans had given him at Ramah, when he fought against Hazael king of Aram.

12. His murder by Jehu (8 29b. 9 27. 28)

And Ahaziah the son of Jehoram king of Judah went down to visit Joram the son of Ahab to Jezreel because he was sick. And when Jehu slew Joram, Ahaziah king of Judah saw it and fled in the direction of Beth-gannim. Then Jehu pursued after him with the words, Him also!

Smite him in the chariot. And they smote him in the ascent of Gur, which is by Ibleam. And he escaped to Megiddo and died there. But his servants carried him to Jerusalem and buried him there in his sepulchre with his fathers in the city of David.

13. Athaliah's seizure of the throne (11 1-3)

Now when Athaliah, the mother of Ahaziah, learned that her son was dead she arose and destroyed all the royal family. But Jehosheba, the daughter of King Jehoram and sister of Ahaziah, took Jehoash, the son of Ahaziah, and stole him away from among the king's sons, who were about to be slain, and put him in the bedchamber. Thus she hid him from Athaliah, so that he was not slain. And he was with her, hid in the temple of Jehovah, six years while Athaliah reigned over the land.

14. Jehoiada's conspiracy (4. 5. 7. 8)

But in the seventh year Jehoiada sent and brought the military commanders of the Carites and of the guards and brought them to him into the temple of Jehovah. Thereupon he showed them the king's son. And he commanded them saying, This is what you shall do: a third part of you go in on the sabbath and keep guard over the royal palace. And the two divisions of you, even all who go forth on the sabbath to keep guard over the temple of Jehovah about the king, shall surround the king, each with his weapons in his hand. And whoever comes within the ranks, let him be slain. Thus you shall be with the king, when he goes out and when he comes in.

15 Proclaiming Joash king (9. 11. 12)

And the military commanders did just as Jehoiada the priest had commanded: each brought his men, both those who were to come in on the sabbath and those who were to go out on the sabbath, to Jehoiada the priest. And the guards stood each with his weapons in his hand, from the south side of the temple to the north side of the temple, before the altar and before the temple, around the king. Then he brought out the king's son and put the crown upon him and the ornaments, and they proclaimed him king and anointed him, and clapped their hands and said, May the king live!

16. Death of Athaliah (13-16)

But when Athaliah heard the cry of the people, she came to the people into the temple of Jehovah. Then she looked and there was the king standing by the pillar, as was the custom, and the commanders and the trumpeters by the

king, and all the people of the land rejoicing and blowing trumpets. Then Athaliah tore her clothes and cried, Treason! Treason! But Jehoiada the priest gave command to the military commanders who were over the army and said to them, Bring her out between the ranks; and whoever follows her, slay with the sword! for the priest said, Let her not be slain in the temple of Jehovah. So they laid hands on her, and, as she went through the horses' entry to the royal palace, she was slain.

17. The covenant (17. 18a)

And Jehoiada made a covenant between Jehovah and the king and the people, that they should be Jehovah's people; likewise between the king and the people. And all the people of the land went to the temple of Baal and destroyed it. His altar and his images they broke completely in pieces, and they slew Mattan the priest of Baal before the altars.

18. Enthronement of Jehoash (18b-20)

Then the priest appointed watchmen over the temple of Jehovah. And he took the military commanders and the Carites, and the guards and all the people of the land, and they brought down the king from the temple of Jehovah and entered through the gate of the guards to the royal palace. And he sat on the royal throne. So all the people of the land rejoiced and the city was quiet. Thus they slew Athaliah with the sword in the royal palace.

19. Jehoiada's counsel (11 21-12 2)

Jehoash was seven years old when he began to reign. In the seventh year of Jehu Jehoash began to reign, and he reigned forty years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Zibiah of Beersheba. And Jehoash did that which pleased Jehovah just as long as Jehoiada the priest instructed him.

20. Failure of the priests to repair temple (1-8)

And Jehoash said to the priests, All the money, which in the form of consecration gifts is brought into the temple of Jehovah, the money which comes from each man's assessment, the money from the persons whose value is estimated, and all the money which the people bring of their own free will into the temple of Jehovah, let the priests take that for themselves each from his acquaintances. They must, however, repair the breaches in the temple, wherever any breach is found. But it transpired that in the twenty-third year of Jehoash the priests had not yet repaired the breaches of the temple. Then King Jehoash called for Jehoiada the

priest and for the other priests and said to them, Why have you not repaired the breaches of the temple? Now therefore take no more money from your acquaintances, but turn it over for the repair of the breaches of the temple. And the priests agreed that they would take no more money from the people nor repair the breaches of the temple.

21. Detailed provisions for repair of temple (9-16)

Then Jehoiada the priest took a chest, bored a hole in its cover, and placed it beside the doorpost at the right of the entrance of the temple of Jehovah. And the priests, who kept watch at the threshold, put therein all the money that was brought into the temple of Jehovah. And as soon as they saw that there was much money in the chest, the king's scribe and the high priest came up, and they put up in bags and counted the money that was found in the temple of Jehovah. Then they gave the money that was weighed out into the hands of those who had the oversight of the temple of Jehovah; and they paid it out to the carpenters and the builders, who worked on the temple of Jehovah, and to the masons and the stone-cutters, and for the buying of timber and hewn stone to repair the breaches of the temple of Jehovah, and for all for which outlay should be made upon the temple for its repairs. However, there were not made for the temple of Jehovah silver cups, basins, trumpets, or any vessels of gold or vessels of silver from the money that was brought into the temple of Jehovah, but they gave that to those who did the work and repaired the temple of Jehovah. Moreover they reckoned not with the men, into whose hand they delivered the money to give to those who did the work, for they dealt faithfully. The money from the trespass-offerings and the money from the sin-offerings was not brought into the temple of Jehovah; it belonged to the priests.

22. The Aramean invasion (17, 18)

Then Hazael king of Aram went up and fought against Gath, and took it. But when Hazael set out to go up to Jerusalem, Jehoash king of Judah took all the consecrated gifts that Jehoshaphat and Jehoram and Ahaziah, his ancestors the kings of Judah, had dedicated, and his own consecrated gifts, and all the gold that was found in the treasures of the temple of Jehovah and of the royal palace, and sent it to Hazael king of Aram. Then he went away from Jerusalem.

23. Conspiracy against Jehoash (20. 21)

But Jehoash's servants arose and made a conspiracy and smote him at the house of Millo, that goeth down to Silla, for his servant Jozacar the son of Shimeath and Jehozabad the son of Shomer put him to death. And they buried him with his fathers in the city of David; and Amaziah his son became king in his place.

24. Amaziah's reign (14 1. 2. 5. 7)

In the second year of Joash son of Jehoahaz king of Israel, Amaziah the son of Jehoash king of Judah began to reign. He was twenty years old when he began to reign and he reigned twenty-nine years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Jehoaddin of Jerusalem. And as soon as the kingdom was firmly established in his hand, he slew his servants who had slain his father. But the children of the murderers he did not put to death. He slew of Edom in the valley of Salt ten thousand, and took Sela [the Rock] by storm, and named it Joktheel to this day.

25. Amaziah's attack upon Jehoash (8-14)

Then Amaziah sent messengers to Jehoash the son of Jehoahaz son of Jehu king of Israel, saying, Come, let us measure strength with each other. But Jehoash the king of Israel sent to Amaziah king of Judah, saying, The thistle in Lebanon sent to the cedar in Lebanon, saying, 'Give your daughter to my son as wife.' But a wild beast in Lebanon passed by and trod down the thistle. You have indeed smitten Edom and your head has been turned. Enjoy your honor and stay at home, for why should you plunge yourself into trouble, so that you and Judah with you will fall? But Amaziah would not hear. So Jehoash king of Israel went up, and he and Amaziah king of Judah measured strength with each other at Bethshemesh, which belongs to Judah. And Judah was defeated by Israel, so that they fled each to his home. And Jehoash king of Israel took Amaziah king of Judah, the son of Jehoash, the son of Ahaziah, captive at Bethshemesh. And he brought him down to Jerusalem and tore down the wall of Jerusalem to the distance of four hundred cubits, from the Gate of Ephraim to the Corner Gate. And he took all the gold and silver, and all the vessels that were found in the temple of Jehovah, and in the treasures of the king's palace, the hostages also, and returned to Samaria.

And Amaziah the son of Jehoash king of Judah lived after the death of Jehoash son of Jehoahaz king of Israel fifteen years. Now the other acts of Amaziah, are they not recorded in the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah? And they made a conspiracy against him in Jerusalem. And he fled to Lachish, but they sent after him to Lachish and slew him there. And they brought him upon horses, and he was buried at Jerusalem with his fathers in the city of David. And all the people of Judah took Azariah, who was sixteen years old, and made him king in the place of his father Amaziah.

26. His death (17-21)

I. **General Characteristics of Judah's History.** The history of Judah during the two centuries following the death of Solomon was uneventful compared with that of Northern Israel. This was partially due to Judah's geographical position. Unlike Northern Israel, it was shut in on nearly every side by natural and political barriers. It was protected by the Dead Sea and the Moabites on the east, by the barren wilderness with its wandering tribes on the south, and by the steep headlands of Judah, with their narrow and easily defended defiles, and the buffer state of the Philistines on the west. Northern Israel received on the north the brunt of the foreign attacks which came from the direction of Damascus and Assyria. The resources of barren, rocky Judah were also insignificant in comparison with those of fruitful Northern Israel. Hence there was comparatively little in the southern kingdom to attract the foreign invader.

The famous dynasty founded by David continued on the throne of Judah until the exile, so that the peaceful internal history of the southern kingdom was in striking contrast to the anarchy and revolution and frequent change of dynasty which characterized Northern Israel's troubled career. During the first two hundred years of Judah's history there were no great crises and therefore no great prophets. Solomon's temple and the royal priesthood also exerted a conservative influence in Judah's religious life far greater than that of the royal sanctuaries at Dan and Bethel. Even the prophetic reform movement instigated by Elijah, which swept over the northern kingdom, affected Judah simply in the form of a priestly revolution led by Jehoiada the priest. Judah's great prophetic awakening did not come until the northern kingdom was on the eve of its fall and the Assyrian armies were penetrating southern Palestine.

II. **Rehoboam's Reign.** Rehoboam's folly in refusing the demands of the northern tribes (*cf.* § LXI) left him with a limited territory, but in possession of the great resources gradually accumulated by his father and grandfather. There is no evidence, however, that he attempted to reconquer the northern tribes, although during his lifetime and that of his immediate successors there was almost constant war between the two kingdoms.

Apparently not long after Rehoboam's accession came the disastrous invasion of Shishak (Sheshonk I, 945–924 B.C.). This energetic ruler was a Libyan mercenary who had mounted the throne of Egypt. During his reign he nearly succeeded in restoring, after two centuries of Egyptian inactivity, the old bounds of the empire established by Ramses II. On the southern gate of the great temple, which he rebuilt at Thebes, he inscribed the names of the one hundred and fifty-six Palestinian cities and districts captured by him in his campaign in southern Syria. Both Northern and Southern Israel suffered from his ravages. The rich cities about the plain of Esdraelon, Megiddo, Taanach, Shunem and Bethshean, were plundered by his mercenaries. In the south Gibeon, Bethhoron, Ajalon, Socoh, Bethanoth, Sharuhen and Arad were captured and looted. The biblical narrative also adds that in Jerusalem, the temple and royal palace were despoiled of all their treasures. Sheshonk's inscription states that he forced the conquered states of Palestine to pay heavy tribute; from which it may be inferred that for a time Northern and Southern Israel were both subject to Egypt.

III. **Asa's Policy.** Abijah, Rehoboam's son, reigned but three years and was succeeded by Asa, who, because of his religious reforms, receives the approval of the prophetic historian. He appears to have made an effort to put away the old Canaanite abominations, and especially the sacred prostitutes who were found in connection with every Canaanite temple, and perhaps at the temple at Jerusalem under Solomon and Rehoboam. He also destroyed the heathen symbol or asherah which had been prepared under the direction of the queen-mother, and apparently attempted to centralize still further the national worship at the royal sanctuary.

Baasha, the contemporary king of Northern Israel, fortified Ramah, only six miles north of Jerusalem, and pressed the war against Judah with such energy that Asa in desperation took gold and silver from the temple treasury and sent it as a gift to persuade the Arameans to attack the Israelites in the rear. The results of the long and disastrous Ara-

mean wars thus instituted have already been studied in the history of the northern kingdom. Asa for a time enjoyed the advantage won in this way over his northern rival; but with the accession of his son Jehoshaphat the old feud between Israel and Judah was healed, and the kings of the north and the south joined their forces against their common foe the Arameans. To seal the alliance Jehoshaphat's son, Ahaziah, married Athaliah, the daughter of Ahab and Jezebel.

IV. **The Priestly Reformation in Judah.** By a strange turn of fortune the immediate effect of the prophetic revolution in Northern Israel was that Ahaziah fell a victim to Jehu's reforming zeal and Athaliah, the daughter of Jezebel, became queen of Judah. In attempting to slaughter all the surviving members of the royal family and to introduce the Baal worship in Jerusalem, she showed herself a true daughter of the Tyrian princess. After a reign of six years, Athaliah was deposed and slain in a temple revolution led by Jehoiada the priest and carried through with the aid simply of the temple police. The details of this important revolution are fully given in the extract from the temple records which has been preserved by the author of Kings.

The boy king, Jehoash, who was thus restored to the throne of his father, ruled during his minority under the direction of Jehoiada the priest. The chief event of his reign was the repair of the temple at Jerusalem. This task had been left to the priests who had, however, used all of the temple revenue for their own personal ends. An agreement was made between the king and the priests that the latter should have the money from the trespass- and sin-offerings and that the remaining gifts to the sanctuary should be placed in a chest at the entrance of the temple. When sufficient money was thus collected, it was expended under the king's direction for temple repairs.

During the latter part of Jehoash's reign, the Aramean king, Hazael, not only overran Northern Israel, but captured and destroyed Philistine Gath, and retired only after he had received heavy tribute from Jehoash. Possibly because of his policy at this time in purchasing peace, Jehoash died at the hands of his own servants. The assassins, however, fled and Jehoash's son, Amaziah, succeeded him on the throne.

V. **The Early Judean Prophetic History.** It was probably soon after the priestly reformation in the days of Jehoash that a group of Judean prophets collected and combined those early traditions of their race, which are now found in the early historical books of the Old Testament. Their history began with the primitive story of creation (now found in Gen. 2^{4b-25}, *cf.* § I), and traced Israel's fortunes down to the accession

of Solomon. Their aim was clearly to illustrate by the past experience of the nation those great prophetic truths regarding Jehovah's character and demands which should guide the people in new and similar crises.

As in the parallel Northern Israelite history, Jehovah is preëminently Israel's God, fighting his people's battles, giving them possession of the land of Canaan, training them by varied experiences and ultimately, under the leadership of his servants, Saul and David, making them masters of the Palestinian world. These early prophetic historians still conceived of Jehovah as appearing at times in bodily form and as speaking directly by word of mouth to his chosen messengers. The spirit of their history, however, is deeply religious and its aims practical and ethical. The characters of the ancient heroes, such as Abraham, Joseph, Moses, are portrayed with remarkable fidelity to universal human experience and are full of suggestion and inspiration to all who are active in positions of public or private trust. This remarkable history as a whole must have been a powerful force in kindling the patriotism and arousing the religious zeal and loyalty of the people of Judah. It reveals clearly the ethical and spiritual atmosphere amidst which such prophets as Isaiah and Micah grew up. It also furnishes the background for the appreciation of the originality and significance of the new and still broader truths revealed to these prophets of the Assyrian age.

VI. **The Reign of Amaziah.** Amaziah, who succeeded Jehoash, appears to have been a man of energy. Early in his reign he won an important victory over the Edomites, who had thrown off the yoke of Judah during the reign of Jehoram. He also captured one of their important rocky fortresses, and probably succeeded in imposing tribute upon them.

Unduly elated by his victory, he challenged Jehoash, king of Northern Israel, which, like Judah, at this time was beginning rapidly to recover its prosperity. The fable of the presumptuous thistle, trodden to earth by the heel of the wild beast, with which Jehoash replied to the challenge, rightly described the comparative weakness of Judah. Amaziah was defeated and captured; the temple and palace at Jerusalem were plundered, and part of the encircling wall was torn down. Hostages were also taken, and Judah became for a time the vassal of Northern Israel.

Like his father, Amaziah died at the hands of conspirators. The exact cause of this conspiracy is not stated; but it appears to have been a strong one, for the conspirators were in complete possession both of

the capital and the outlying towns. Their action seems to have been simply a public protest against the policy and character of Amaziah himself; for, after they had put him to death, they raised his sixteen-year-old son, Azariah, popularly known by the shorter name Uzziah, to the throne.

With the death of Amaziah, Judah began to emerge from its long seclusion and obscurity and to participate in the stirring world politics of the age. In the quiet of the two centuries following the death of Solomon there is little external evidence of progress in Judah's religious, political and social life. In dealing with the conspirators who slew Jehoash, however, a higher ethical principle was observed, for, contrary to the earlier usage, the lives of the kinsmen of the culprits were spared. The early Judean prophetic stories, with their high ethical teachings and finished literary style, also demonstrate that during this period the teachers of Judah were quietly educating the people and laying deep the foundations of their national character. The problems and events of the period are petty and unimportant; but at its close the nation was ready to enter into a larger world and to pass through the series of painful experiences which were to open the eyes of its prophets to those new truths which made their messages of universal value to mankind.

§ LXXIV. THE REIGN OF UZZIAH AND THE CALL OF ISAIAH

1. Uzziah's reign (II K. 15$^{1-4.}$ 14^{22})

In the twenty-seventh year of Jeroboam king of Israel, Uzziah [Azariah] son of Amaziah king of Judah began to reign. Sixteen years old was he when he began to reign, and he reigned fifty-two years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Jecoliah of Jerusalem. And he did that which pleased Jehovah, just as his father Amaziah had done. However the high places were not taken away; the people still sacrificed and burnt their offerings on the high places. He built Elath and restored it to Judah after King Amaziah slept with his fathers.

2. His victories (II C. 26$^{6-9}$)

And he went against the Philistines, and broke down the wall of Gath and the wall of Jabneh and the wall of Ashdod and built cities near Ashdod and among the Philistines. And God helped him against the Philistines and against the Arabians who dwelt in Gur-baal, and the Meunites. And the Ammonites paid tribute to Uzziah; and his reputation

spread abroad even to the entrance of Egypt; for he became exceedingly strong.

3. Building enterprises (9. 10)

Moreover Uzziah built towers in Jerusalem at the Corner Gate and at the Valley Gate and at the corner of the wall and fortified them. And he built towers in the wilderness and hewed out many cisterns, for he had many herds in the lowland and husbandmen in the plain and vinedressers in the mountains and in the fruitful fields, for he loved agriculture.

4. His leprosy and death (II K. 15 5-7)

And Jehovah smote the king, so that he was a leper to the day of his death. And he dwelt in his house without restraint, while Jotham, the king's son, was at the head of the royal household, ruling the people of the land. Now the other acts of Uzziah and all that he did, are they not recorded in the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah? And Uzziah slept with his fathers; and they buried him with his fathers in the city of David, and Jotham his son became king in his place.

5. Jotham's policy and wars (32-38)

In the second year of Pekah the son of Remaliah king of Israel, Jotham the son of Uzziah king of Judah began to reign. He was twenty-five years old when he began to reign, and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Jerusha the daughter of Zadok. And he did that which pleased Jehovah; he did just as his father Uzziah had done. However the high places were not taken away; the people still sacrificed and burnt their offerings on the high places. He built the upper gate of the temple of Jehovah. In those days Jehovah began to send against Judah Rezin the king of Aram and Pekah the son of Remaliah. Now the other acts of Jotham and all that he did, are they not recorded in the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah? And Jotham slept with his fathers and was buried with his fathers in the city of David his father, and Ahaz his son became king in his place.

6. Isaiah's vision of Jehovah's majesty and holiness (Is. 6 1-4)

It was in the year that King Uzziah died that I saw the Lord sitting upon a lofty and exalted throne; and the skirts of his robe filled the temple. Seraphim were standing attendant before him. Each had six wings; with two he

covered his face, with two he covered his loins and with two he flew. And they kept calling to each other, saying:

Holy, holy, holy, is Jehovah of hosts,
The whole earth is full of his glory.

And the foundations of the thresholds shook at the sound of their calling, and the temple was filling with smoke.
Then I said:

Woe to me! I am undone,
For I myself am a man with unclean lips,
And I am dwelling among a people with unclean lips;
Yet mine eyes have seen the King, Jehovah of hosts.

7. Its effect upon him (5)

Then one of the seraphim flew to me with a live coal in his hand that he had taken with tongs from off the altar. And with it he touched my mouth and said:

8. His moral cleansing (6. 7)

See, this has touched thy lips,
Therefore thine iniquity is gone and thy sin forgiven.

Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying:

9. His call (8)

Whom shall I send,
And who will go for us?

And I said: Here am I; send me. And he said:

10. The reception of his message (9. 10)

Go and say to this people:
Keep on hearing, but have no comprehension!
Keep on seeing, but have no perception!
Make fat the heart of this people,
And their ears dull and besmear their eyes,
Lest they see with their eyes and hear with their ears,
And their heart perceive, and their health be restored!

And I said: How long, O Lord? And he said:

11. Grave nature of his message (11-13b)

Until the cities are in ruins without an inhabitant,
And the houses without a human occupant, and the land is left in utter desolation,
And Jehovah have sent the men far away, and in the midst of the land the deserted territory be great.

And should there still be a tenth in it, it must in turn be fuel for the flame,
Like the terebinth and the oak of which after felling but a stump remains.

I. **Uzziah's Victories.** The reign of Uzziah (or Azariah) was contemporary with that of Jeroboam II of Northern Israel. The course of events in the two Hebrew kingdoms during this important epoch was in many ways closely parallel. The attacks of the Arameans had ceased and the advance of the Assyrians had been arrested. Although Uzziah's long reign is passed over by the author of Kings with only a very brief statement, it is evident from the subsequent history, and especially from the sermons of Isaiah, that, like Jeroboam II of Northern Israel, he was an exceedingly able and energetic ruler. The narrative of Chronicles has preserved a fuller account of his policy and achievements, and this has been incorporated in the text adopted above.

Following up his father's victory over the Edomites, he conquered the important town of Elath on the eastern arm of the Red Sea and rebuilt it, probably as a port from which to engage in commerce with Arabia and more distant lands. The Chronicler states that he also tore down the wall of Gath, which had been previously captured by the Aramean king Hazael, and dismantled the neighboring northern Philistine towns, Jabneh and Ashdod. The conquered territory was apparently colonized with Hebrews. Successful campaigns are recorded against the Arabians, probably in the south, and the Ammonites on the east. It is at least evident, in the light of the data, that Uzziah succeeded in extending the boundary of Judah both in the south and west, and thereby opened the doors for the trade which brought in the products and customs of the larger Semitic world.

II. **Uzziah's Home Policy.** The Chronicler adds that Uzziah built defensive towers about the walls of Jerusalem, probably also repairing the portion of the wall destroyed under the reign of his father Amaziah. Like the earlier kings of Israel, he also had private herds and vineyards and fields throughout his kingdom and devoted himself to improving the defences and water supply, especially in southern Judah. From these references it may be concluded that Uzziah was as active in developing the internal resources of his kingdom as he was in extending its boundaries and commerce.

III. **The Political and Social Effects of Uzziah's Reign.** The new and close contact with the outside world and the national pros-

perity which resulted from the strong policy of Uzziah, produced the same political and social conditions in Judah as they had in Northern Israel under the corresponding reign of Jeroboam II. New ambitions and hopes stirred the people. Foreign fashions and ideas came sweeping in from every side. Naturally the nobles, the wealthy citizens, and King Uzziah himself profited most by this period of peace. To them came the spoils of conquest and they alone were able to engage in foreign trade.

Under the influence of this increasing taste for luxury, the ruling class in Judah became regardless of its responsibility, and each man vied with the other in aping foreign customs and in building up a great fortune at the expense of the common people dependent upon him. The old simplicity was fast disappearing, and in its place came false pride and greed and the resulting disregard of the needs and the rights of the poor and dependent. Judah, therefore like Northern Israel, was sadly lacking in social and moral integrity and ill-fitted to meet a great political crisis.

To a thoughtful student of the political situation grave dangers were also visible on the more distant horizon. These became more apparent about the close of the reign of Uzziah, for Tiglath-pileser IV had mounted the throne of Assyria and was beginning to gather in, one after the other, the different nations of the western world. Judah lay right in the path of Assyria's advance; but the rulers who should have been most active in preparing the little kingdom for its period of peril were selfish, corrupt, and blind to the distant danger.

IV. **The Death Year of Uzziah.** During the latter part of his reign, Uzziah was a victim of the loathsome disease of leprosy. Accepting the dogma that every overwhelming affliction was the result of some great crime, later tradition attributed Uzziah's disease to what it considered an act of impiety in connection with the temple worship. In Uzziah's time, however, the Hebrew laws which banished lepers from the city and treated them as already dead, had probably not been formulated. While he lived, Uzziah appears to have directed the national policy, although his son Jotham acted as regent. This son had none of the strength and energy of his father, so that by every thoughtful observer of conditions within and without Judah the approaching death of Uzziah must have been awaited with grave foreboding.

When at last, about 738 B.C., the news came that the fatal disease had completed its work and that King Uzziah was dead, the situation was well calculated to stir to its very depths the mind of a thoughtful,

devoted patriot. In Northern Israel Amos and Hosea had laid bare the crime and fatal weakness of that greater Hebrew kingdom and had presented new and far higher standards of national and individual responsibility. Measured by these same standards Judah's inherent weakness and guilt stood clearly revealed. The occasion called for wise leadership and counsel. Most of all, it demanded a prophet to arouse the conscience of the nation and to initiate a fundamental reform which should prepare the nation for the crisis which impended.

V. **The Young Isaiah.** These portentous conditions are the background of Isaiah's call. The death of the king impressed Judah's needs upon the mind of the Hebrew patriot and opened his eyes to that vision of divine truth which constituted his call to be a prophet.

For forty and probably fifty years after this critical moment in his life, Isaiah continued to preach to his countrymen with undiminished energy. It is certain, therefore, that he was very young at the time of his call, probably not more than twenty or twenty-five, just assuming the responsibilities of a husband and citizen. From his personal acquaintance with the priests and nobles and rulers of Israel and with the policy of the court at different periods, and from the fact that he is identified as the scion of a well-known house, it seems probable that Isaiah came not from the ranks but belonged to a wealthy, if not noble, family.

Isaiah's recorded addresses reveal an alert, well-trained mind. He was not only intimately acquainted with the political and social problems of his own day, but also familiar with the past traditions and experiences of his race. He was the master of a brilliant, forceful literary style. It is the spoken style—that of the orator rather than that of the writer. Each sentence is like the blow of a battle-axe, aimed straight at its goal and hewing aside all opposition. The form in which his addresses are cast is that of poetry. A marvellous lilt and a balanced parallelism runs through them all; but Isaiah, like Hosea, did not allow his impassioned eloquence to be restrained or held in leash by the artificial demands of Hebrew metre.

In every word which fell from Isaiah's lips there is revealed a man of unbounded energy, unflinching courage and firm conviction. He knew well the different currents of thought and influence in little Judah, but, more than that, he dared to face facts and conditions squarely and to draw from them the logical and inevitable conclusions. He was not bound by public opinion or by the prevailing standards of his day. He had caught a vision of something higher, and was therefore

filled with an eternal discontent, as he viewed the petty, mean, corrupt practices of his countrymen. His patriotism also was of such a lofty character that he was ready to make any personal sacrifice, even to go barefooted through a cold Judean winter, that he might save his beloved country from a fatal policy.

VI. **The Account of Isaiah's Vision.** The account of Isaiah's vision stands not at the beginning of his prophecies, but at the head of the little group of addresses which represent his work in the critical year 735 B.C. Its position and content confirm the conclusion that it was not written until about 734, when his counsels had been rejected by king and people and the discouraging nature of his work, as predicted in the closing verses, had become apparent. His object was obviously to "bind up the testimony" and to make clear to his disciples the nature of that great experience which had made him a prophet and given him that clear consciousness of a divine call which inspired him to go on with his work, calm and undisturbed in the face of discouragement and misunderstanding.

VII. **The Meaning of Isaiah's Vision.** Isaiah's vision evidently came to him in the temple whither he had gone up to worship. The many grave problems, which Uzziah's death brought out in clear relief, were doubtless in his mind. Suddenly, as he found himself in the sacred precincts, he saw instead of the symbols the reality for which they stood. Instead of the ark, Jehovah's ancient throne, he seemed to see the Lord himself, vast, majestic, dominating the whole temple with his presence. Instead of the attendant cherubim of wood and gold, he beheld with clear mental vision spirits of fire, symbols of the most effective purifying force in the universe, guarding Jehovah from contact with anything impure. Not only by their presence and acts, but with their lips they seemed to be ever proclaiming the transcendent holiness of Jehovah whose glory was not limited to the precincts of the temple but filled the whole earth.

In its original derivation the Hebrew word *holy* means *separate, apart from, distinct*, but in Isaiah's vision it evidently had a double content. It emphasizes both Jehovah's supreme majesty and his moral sanctity. It was this clear, spiritual vision of Jehovah's true character that made the young Hebrew patriot a prophet: In the light of that vision his own guilt and the vile uncleanness of his nation were startlingly revealed. The cry of horror and confession that burst from his lips was quickly answered. The assurance that his sins had been forgiven and that he was morally clean in the sight of God, came not

through the symbolism of the blood of animals slain on the great altar, but directly from God himself. The coal from the altar symbolized the cleansing of the thoughts and purposes of which the lips were but the medium of expression.

When the very fountain of his life and activity had thus been purified, Isaiah was at last ready to respond unhesitatingly to that inner call to service, which had doubtless long been ringing in his ears, as he had pondered the crying needs of his nation. Now he fully recognized that Jehovah was the source of that call, and his quick, voluntary response made him henceforth an ambassador of the Highest.

VIII. **Isaiah's Commission.** Doubtless, from the first the discouragement and opposition which every true prophet must meet were clearly before the eyes of Isaiah; but the peculiarly trying experiences of his early years are plainly reflected in the account of his commission. His task was similar to that of Amos and Hosea: it was to proclaim saving truth to his countrymen and to meet with only apathy or ignorance and contempt. Isaiah also realized through observation and experience the sad fact that the rejection of truth plainly stated renders the mental and moral and spiritual conditions of those who reject it even worse than before.

Calamity after calamity was destined to overtake Judah, until but a small remnant should survive. Although Isaiah does not here develop the thought in detail, the stump of a sturdy oak surviving evidently represented his hope that when discipline had done its work, the remnant might grow again into a strong, purified nation that would realize Jehovah's purpose in the world.

Thus this marvellous sixth chapter reflects the entire gamut of Isaiah's experiences; his youthful struggles with the sense of personal responsibility, his strong, enlightened patriotism, his keen insight, and that transcendent vision of Jehovah's majesty and holiness which never faded from the prophet's memory. The chapter also suggests those long years of opposition and discouragement, the folly of king and people in rejecting his sane counsels, the disasters that overtook Judah at the hands of the Assyrian conquerors, and, above all, that deathless hope in the future of his race and in the goodness of the Jehovah which never failed Isaiah in his half century of tireless activity.

§ LXXV. ISAIAH'S EARLY SOCIAL SERMONS

1. Prologue (Is. 5[1 a.b])

Let me sing a song of my friend,
A love song regarding his vineyard.

2. The well-nurtured but unfruitful vineyard (1c-2)

A vineyard belongs to my friend on a hill that is fruitful.
He digged it and cleared it of stones and choice vines he planted.
A tower he built in its midst and hewed out a wine-press.
He looked to find grapes that were good, but wild grapes it yielded.

3. Appeal for a decision (3. 4)

And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem, ye people of Judah,
Judge now, for yourselves I pray, between me and my vineyard:
What more could be done to my vineyard than that which I have done?
When I looked to find grapes that were good, why yielded it wild grapes?

4. Destruction of the vineyard (5. 6)

And now let me tell you what I purpose to do to my vineyard.
For I will remove its hedge that it be devoured,
And I will break through its wall that it be down-trodden;
Yea, I will make it a waste, not pruned nor weeded.
And then shall it put forth thorns, and thickets of brambles.
To the clouds will I give command that they rain not upon it.

5. Jehovah's vineyard (7)

For the vineyard of Jehovah of hosts is the house of Israel,
And the men of Judah—they are his cherished plantation.
He looked for justice, but, behold! bloodshed.
For redress, but, behold! a cry of distress.

6. Its evil fruits: land monopoly (8-10)

Woe to those who join house to house,
Who add field to field
Until there is no space left,
And ye dwell alone in the midst of the land.
In mine ears Jehovah of hosts hath sworn:
Surely many houses shall become a desolation,

Though great and fair they shall be without inhabitants.
For ten acres of vineyard will yield but one bushel,
And ten bushels of seed but one bushel of grain.

7. Debauchery and disregard of responsibility (11-17)

Woe to those who rise at dawn
To pursue strong drink,
Who tarry late in the evening
Until wine inflames them.
And lyre, and harp and timbrel
And flute and wine are at their banquets.
But they regard not the work of Jehovah
And see not what his hands have made.
Therefore my people go into captivity unprepared,
And their men of wealth are famished,
And their noisy revellers are parched with thirst.
Therefore Sheol yawns greedily,
And to the widest extent opens its mouth.
And the nobles of Zion and her noisy revellers shall go down into it,
Together with her careless throng and all who rejoice within her.
And lambs shall graze as in a wilderness,
And fatlings feed amid the ruins.

8. Foolish, impious scepticism (18-19)

Woe to those who draw guilt upon themselves with cords of folly!
And punishment as with a cart rope!
Who say: Let what he would do hasten!
Let it come speedily that we may see it!
Let the purpose of Israel's Holy One draw near,
And come, that we may perceive it!

9. Vicious sophistry (20)

Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil,
Who put darkness for light, and light for darkness,
Who put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!

10. Pride and egoism (21)

Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes!
And prudent in their own conceit!

Woe to those who are heroic in drinking wine,
And valiant in mixing strong drink!
Who for a bribe vindicate the wicked,
And strip the innocent man of his innocence.

11. Shameless injustice (22. 23)

Therefore as a tongue of fire devours stubble,
And as hay shrivels in a flame;
So their root shall be as rottenness,
And their blossom go up like dust,
Because they have rejected the instruction of Jehovah of hosts,
And despised the word of Israel's Holy One.

12. Sudden and complete destruction imminent (24)

Jehovah hath renounced his people, the house of Israel,
For they are full of divination from the East,
And they practice magic like the Philistines.
With foreigners they make compacts.
Their land is full of silver and gold,
And endless are their treasures.
Their land is full of horses,
And countless are their chariots.
And their land is full of idols,
The work of their own hands they worship,
That which their own fingers have made.

13. Jehovah's attitude toward the prevailing superstitions, materialism and idolatry (2 6-8)

My people—a boy is their leader,
And women rule over them!
My people—thy guides lead thee astray
And thy highways they have brought to ruin.

14. Inefficiency of the present rulers (3 12)

Jehovah standeth forth to present his case,
And he standeth up to judge his people.
Jehovah entereth into judgment
With the elders of his people and their princes.
'Ye yourselves have devoured the vineyard,
The spoils of the needy are in your houses.
What do you mean by crushing my people

15. Jehovah's charge against the elders and princes (13-15)

And by grinding the face of the needy?'
Is the oracle of the Lord Jehovah of hosts.

16. Judgment awaiting the proud, vain women ($3^{16,17,24}$ 4^{1})

And Jehovah saith: Because Zion's daughters are haughty
And walk with heads held high, and wanton glances,
Tripping along as they go and jingling with their ankles,
Therefore, the Lord will smite with a scab the crown of the head of the daughters of Zion,
And Jehovah will expose their shame.
And instead of perfume, there shall be rottenness;
And instead of a girdle, a rope; instead of carefully arranged hair, baldness.
And instead of the beautiful garment, sackcloth; branding, instead of beauty.
Thy men shall fall by the sword and thy warriors in battle.
And Zion's gates shall sigh and lament, and she shall sit on the ground despoiled.
And seven women shall take hold of one man in that day,
Saying: 'Our own bread will we eat, and our own garments will we wear,
Only let us bear thy name; take thou away our disgrace!'

17. Israel's calamities at the hands of its foes (9^{8-12})

A message the Lord sends against Jacob,
And it falls upon Israel,
So that the entire people shall know it—
Ephraim and the inhabitants of Samaria,
Who are so lifted up with pride and haughtiness of heart that they say,
'Bricks have fallen down, but we will rebuild with hewn stones;
Sycamores have been cut down, but we will set cedars in their place.'
Therefore Jehovah hath stirred up their oppressors,
And spurred on their enemies against them,
Aram on the east and the Philistines on the west,
To devour Israel greedily.
For all this his anger is not turned away,
And his hand is outstretched still.

But the people turn not to him who smites them,
And Jehovah they do not seek.
So Jehovah hath cut off from Israel head and tail,
Palm-branch and rush in one day;
The elder and the prominent man—he is the head,
The prophet who gives false oracles—he is the tail.
Thus the guides of this people prove misleaders,
And those who are led by them are devoured.
Therefore the Lord spareth not their stalwart youths,
And on their orphans and widows he hath no pity,
For each of them is godless and an evil-doer,
And every mouth speaks impious folly.
For all this his anger is not turned away,
And his hand is outstretched still.

18. Destruction of the leaders and the led (13-17)

For unrighteousness burns like a fire
Which consumes thorns and briars;
And kindles in the thickets of the forest,
And they roll up columns of smoke.
Because of the wrath of Jehovah the land is consumed,
And the people become food for the flames.
No one has pity on his fellows;
They cut off slices on the right, yet are hungry,
They devour on the left, yet are unsatisfied.
Each devours his neighbor's flesh:
Manasseh, Ephraim and Ephraim, Manasseh;
And both together are against Judah.
For all this his anger is not turned away,
And his hand is outstretched still.

19. Cruel oppression of class by class (18-21)

Woe to those who set up iniquitous decrees,
And the scribes who devote themselves to writing oppression,
To turn aside the dependent from securing justice,
To despoil the afflicted of my people of their right,
That widows may be their prey,
And that they may despoil orphans!
What, then, will you do in the day of punishment,
And of the driving tempest which shall come from afar?
To whom will you flee for aid,

20. All help to fail the oppressors (10 1-4)

And where will you leave your wealth?
Only as they crouch under the captives,
And fall under the slain.
For all this his anger is not turned away,
And his hand is outstretched still.

21. Coming judgment at the hand of an invincible foreign foe (5 26-29. 25e)

Therefore he will raise a signal to a distant nation,
And will hiss to it to come from the end of the earth.
And behold, quickly, swiftly it will come.
There will be none weary nor any who stumble;
The girdle of their loins is not loosened
And the thong of their sandals does not tear,
Whose arrows are sharpened,
And whose bows are all bent.
The hoofs of their horses are counted as flint,
And their wheels are counted as a whirlwind.
Their roaring is like that of a lion,
Like young lions they roar and growl;
They seize their prey and escape, and none rescues it.
For all this his anger is not turned away,
And his hand is outstretched still.

I. **The Present Form of the Book of Isaiah.** It is clear that the book of Isaiah in its present form is the result of frequent and fundamental revision. The fact that Isaiah's writings have been repeatedly supplemented and reëdited illustrates the esteem and devotion with which the prophet was regarded by subsequent generations. The noble prophecies in chapters 40–66, which interpret Israel's universal mission, are now generally recognized as coming from a period certainly not earlier than the Babylonian exile. Many later passages have also been inserted in the first thirty-nine chapters, in which are found the original sermons of Isaiah, the son of Amoz. The result of this repeated revision is that a clear-cut literary analysis of the book is practically impossible. Eight or nine general divisions may be distinguished in the first thirty-nine chapters.

The book opens with a general introduction, chapter 1, and a little group of social sermons, chapters 2–5, to which also belongs 9^8–10^4. Then follows the account of Isaiah's activity in 734 B.C., recorded in chapters 7 and 8. These chapters are in turn introduced by an account of his call in chapter 6, and are supplemented by later Messianic

prophecies (9^{1-7}, 11, 12). Next comes a large collection of foreign prophecies of various dates (13–23). Chapters 24–27 contain certain very late prophecies. In chapters 28–31 are found selections from Isaiah's sermons preached in connection with the great crisis of 701 B.C. Chapters 34 and 35 contain a post-exilic apocalypse. The historical chapters, 36 and 37, record the closing years of Isaiah's activity, and 38 and 39 certain incidents preceding the invasion of Sennacherib in 701 B.C.

II. **The Different Periods of Isaiah's Activity.** Isaiah's prophetic work may be divided into four distinct periods. The first, extending from about 738 to 735 B.C., is represented by the account of his call and the stirring social sermons found in chapters 2 to 5 and 9^{8}–10^{4}. The second period was the great crisis of 735–4 B.C., when Tiglath-pileser IV's impending invasion of Palestine led the kings of Damascus and Northern Israel to attempt to force Judah to join them in opposing the common foe. Chapters 17^{1-11} and 7 and 8, clearly belong to this period. The third period extends from 710 to 701 B.C., and culminates in the first great invasion of Sennacherib. The fourth and last period of Isaiah's activity was apparently connected with a second western campaign of Sennacherib about 690 B.C.

III. **Isaiah's First Address.** Owing to the lack of chronological arrangement in the book of Isaiah, it is impossible to determine with absolute certainty which chapter contains his earliest public address. From the present order it has been generally inferred that it is to be found in chapters 2 and 3. The reference, however, to children ruling over the land is generally, and with great plausibility, interpreted as applying to Ahaz. If so, this sermon must be dated several years after Isaiah's call in 738 B.C. Its powerful arraignment of the nation, and especially of the ruling classes, suggests that when it was uttered, Isaiah's reputation and authority as a prophet had already been established. It also reflects national corruption and weakness which did not become glaringly apparent until some years after the death of Uzziah.

On the other hand, the addresses contained in chapter 5 clearly come from the earliest period of Isaiah's activity. Apparently he came before the elders of Jerusalem as an unknown, inexperienced prophet, and was fully aware of the need of superlative tact and poetic skill to win a hearing for his unpleasant message. Like the opening sermon of Amos, the theme of chapter 5 is social injustice. It voices, in the name of Jehovah, the burning indignation which filled the soul of the prophet

as he viewed the greedy monopolies, the gross intemperance, the disregard of responsibilities, and the sceptical and defiant attitude of the rulers of the nation. It may therefore, with considerable assurance, be regarded as Isaiah's first sermon.

IV. **The Song of the Vineyard.** It takes little imagination to picture the situation. The occasion was probably one of the festivals when the people were all assembled at Jerusalem, ready and eager to listen to the stories of the professional story-tellers and the songs of their poets.

To an audience, made up for the most part of those who were either vine-dressers or owners of vineyards, no theme could have been of greater interest than that which Isaiah chose for his opening song. The meter which he used was the dramatic five-beat measure, which was employed either to express deep sorrow or supreme joy. In this marvellous parable in song the narrative element is also especially prominent.

In his opening words, Isaiah pictures in detail the steps that were taken by his unknown friend to develop a fruitful vineyard. He then turns to his hearers and demands that they decide what should be done with a vineyard, thus carefully nurtured, which bore only sour, useless grapes. While they are nodding their approval of the justice of the decision to tear it down and make it a waste, the prophet interprets his parable: Jehovah is the friend, Judah is the carefully nurtured vineyard which has borne only the wild grapes. His hearers stood condemned by the very principles which they had so readily accepted only a moment before.

V. **The Crimes of Judah's Leaders.** The six or seven woes which follow may have been a part of Isaiah's original address, or they may have been taken from other and later sermons. Their present position, however, is exceedingly appropriate. They describe in impassioned words those heinous crimes, which made it necessary for Jehovah to destroy his vineyard Judah. These are the same evils which have disgraced civilization through all the ages. They are the fruits of bestial selfishness and greed and class pride, entrenched behind the bulwarks of wealth and authority.

Isaiah saw clearly in little Judah the pernicious effects of land monopoly. Men, who were intent merely upon securing freedom from intrusion and the selfish enjoyment of nature's beauties, had built up great estates by purchase and legalized injustice. The prophet could fully appreciate the enjoyment which these great landed estates brought to their owners, for he himself belonged to the ruling class; but he also saw

the other side: the masses deprived by necessity or compulsion of their hereditary holdings, hungry and ill-clad, and crowded in the narrow lanes of the city or else forced to toil as slaves for cruel masters on the very lands which had been held by their fathers. In endeavoring to correct these social evils, Isaiah necessarily appealed to a higher law than that recognized by his land and age: the right of every man to enjoy as the reward of his labors the common gifts of nature. Isaiah also boldly asserted the responsibility of wealth and the guilt of all who disregarded that responsibility. With his keen inspired insight, he saw the baneful economic and political effects of the selfish luxury and debauchery of those who were called by birth and wealth to be the leaders and guardians of the masses. In imagination he beheld his nation rapidly rushing on to the ruin which awaited it, and on the distant canvas of the future he caught a glimpse of Jerusalem and Judah desolate and in ruins, with cattle feeding where stood prosperous towns.

His message of warning and condemnation was also directed toward those who persisted in their foolish, guilty course, defying Jehovah to punish them if he would. Their attitude is the first shadow of scepticism which sweeps across the page of Israel's history, and is one of the early fruits of that artificial, corrupt civilization which had begun to engulf Judah during the prosperous reign of Uzziah. Akin to the defiant sceptics, were the sophists of that early day, who blinked at facts and deliberately perverted their own judgment and that of the community, so that crime passed as virtue, while the simple virtues of justice, honesty, and mercy were held in derision.

With indignant scorn the prophet pointed his finger at the men who were wise simply in their own eyes, but who had lost the true perspective by which to judge themselves and their fellows. With biting sarcasm he addressed those who boasted of their valiant achievements, not on the battle-field or in the service of their nation, but in excelling each other in drinking and mixing strong drinks; who corrupted public tribunals and took pleasure in maligning the innocent.

As Isaiah analyzed existing social and political conditions, he was filled with alarm. Although called to a unique destiny, Jehovah's people were constantly resorting to heathen divination and magic and were putting their trust in full treasuries and a strong army, and in idols made with their own hands, rather than in their divine king who alone could deliver them. Even in the hearts of the women, and especially of the wives of the nobles, there were no traces of pity and love,

but, instead, simply pride and a consuming ambition to surpass each other in displaying their personal beauty and attire occupied their entire attention. Isaiah saw clearly that such a nation could fight only a losing battle, and that such women could learn only through the grievous oriental disgrace of childlessness and the woes of widowhood, how disastrous it is to stifle the divine impulses of kindness and mercy.

VI. **Jehovah's Judgments upon Israel and Judah.** In the ninth and tenth chapters, and in the closing verses of the fifth chapter, is found a powerful address, in which Isaiah develops still further the inevitable consequences of social corruption. It consists of five stanzas of fourteen lines each bound together by the terrible refrain:

> For all this his anger is not turned away,
> And his hand is outstretched still.

In the first strophe he portrays the false confidence of the Northern Israelites, who were shutting their eyes to the calamities, which had overtaken them, and vainly dreaming of Israel's future glory. In the next strophe he analyzes the reason for the national decay, and reiterates the conclusion of Amos that it is because "they do not seek Jehovah" and because their leaders have proved misleaders.

Isaiah then describes the greed and social crime of these leaders. He likens them to cannibals who feed upon the flesh of their own kinsmen. He also denounces those who make the law an instrument for oppressing and crushing the people.

In the concluding stanza the prophet pictures the irresistible advance of the Assyrians. The passage recalls the vivid battle scenes on the contemporary Assyrian monuments. One can hear in Isaiah's powerful words the beat of the horses' hoofs, the rattle of the chariot wheels, and the roar of the oncoming host; but, above all the follies and crimes of rulers and people and the shock of battle, one can see, through the eye of the prophet, the majestic God of holiness, meting out impartial justice to high and low, to Israelite and heathen alike.

Thus, in the language and historical setting of his own day, Isaiah laid down certain universal social principles which humanity has been slow to appreciate and apply. It is exceedingly significant that he had practically nothing to say about the crimes of the petty criminals, who doubtless figured most prominently in the public eye and before the law-courts of his day. The prophet evidently considered these minor

criminals, whom society is always so ready to condemn and punish, as comparatively harmless. All his denunciations and warnings are directed against the great criminals, the men of position, culture, and wealth, who were regarded as the pillars of society and the champions of the state religion. The majority of them were doubtless living up to the standards of their class; but those standards tolerated shameful injustice and oppression, under the guise of law and religion, and a fatal disregard of the higher responsibilities which the strong and wealthy and those who rule owe to their weaker fellow-countrymen. Isaiah, like Amos, declared that these men "who sat at ease" were the really dangerous foes of the nation—the traitors who were betraying its most vital interests. The danger was all the greater because their guilt was scarcely recognized by themselves or by the rank and file of the nation. The crimes of Judah's ruling and wealthy classes were doubtless little worse than those of the same classes to-day. They were the products of a false system; but the moment was supremely significant in human history; for at last a man was found, who was able clearly to analyze the situation, to step out of his class and to place the responsibility for the nation's corruption precisely where it belonged.

§ LXXVI. ISAIAH'S ADVICE TO KING AND PEOPLE IN 735 B.C.

1. Ahaz's religious policy (II K. 16 1-4)

In the seventeenth year of Pekah the son of Remaliah Ahaz the son of Jotham became king of Judah. Twenty years old was Ahaz when he began to reign, and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem. And he did not do that which pleased Jehovah his God, as did David his ancestor, but walked in the way of the kings of Israel. He also made his son to pass through fire according to the abominations of the nations, whom Jehovah drove out before the Israelites. And he sacrificed and burnt their offerings on the high places and on the hills and under every green tree.

2. Attack of the northern foes (5. 6)

Then Rezin king of Aram and Pekah son of Remaliah came up to attack Jerusalem; and they besieged Ahaz, but could not overcome him. At that time the king of Edom recovered Elath for Edom and drove the Judahites from Elath; and the Edomites came to Elath and have dwelt there until the present day.

3. Terror of the Judahites (Is. 7 [2])

Now when it was reported to the house of David that Aram had settled down upon Ephraim, Ahaz's heart and the heart of his people shook as the trees of the forest shake before the wind.

4. Isaiah's advice not to fear ([3-6])

Then Jehovah said to Isaiah: Go forth now to meet Ahaz, together with thy son, Shear-jashub, at the end of the conduit of the upper pool on the highway by the fuller's field, and say to him, 'Take heed and keep thyself calm; fear not, neither be faint hearted because of these two fag ends of smoking firebrands, because of the fierce anger of Rezin and Aram, and the son of Remaliah. For Aram hath purposed evil against thee with Ephraim and the son of Remaliah, saying, "Let us go up against Judah and distress it and overpower it and appoint the son of Tabeal king in its midst." '

5. Real weakness of the foes ([7-9b])

Thus saith the Lord Jehovah:
It shall not stand, neither shall it come to pass.
For the head of Aram is Damascus,
And the head of Damascus is Rezin,
And the head of Ephraim is Samaria,
And the head of Samaria is the son of Remaliah.

6. The only way of deliverance ([9c])

If ye will not hold fast,
Verily ye shall not stand fast.

7. Ahaz's refusal to be convinced ([10-12])

And Jehovah spoke further to Ahaz, saying: Ask thee a sign of Jehovah, thy God; ask it either in the depth of Sheol or in the height above. But Ahaz said, I will not ask, neither will I put Jehovah to the test.

8. The sign of the early overthrow of Aram, Israel and Judah ([13-17])

Then Isaiah said: Hear now, O house of David, is it too small a thing for you to weary men that ye must also weary my God? Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: behold a young woman will conceive and bear a son and call his name Immanuel. Curds and honey will be his food, when he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good. For before the child shall know how to refuse the evil and choose the good, those two kings thou dreadest shall be forsaken. Jehovah will bring upon thee, and upon thy people and upon thy father's house days such as have not been since the day Ephraim departed from Judah.

And in that day Jehovah will hiss to the flies and the bees
And they shall all come and settle down,
In the ravines between the heights and in the clefts of the rocks,
And on all thorn bushes and on all pastures.

9. Completeness of the destruction to be wrought by Jehovah's agent Assyria (18-25)

In that day the Lord will shave
With a razor that is hired beyond the Euphrates,
The head and the hidden hair,
And the beard also will it take away.

And in that day a man will keep alive a young cow and two sheep,
And because of the abundance of milk which they shall produce he shall live on curds;
For curds and honey shall be the food of all who are left in the midst of the land.

And in that day wherever there used to be a thousand vines, worth a thousand pieces of silver,
That place shall be but thorns and briars.
With arrows and with bow will men come thither;
For all the land will become thorns and briars.
And as for all the mountains which used to be hoed,
None will go thither for fear of thorns and briars.
And it shall be a place where cattle shall be sent and sheep shall trample.

10. The public tablet (8 1. 2)

Then Jehovah said to me, Take thee a large tablet and write upon it in plain characters:

SWIFT BOOTY SPEEDY PREY

and take for me, as trusty witnesses, Uriah the priest and Zechariah, the son of Jeberechiah.

11. Name of Isaiah's son (3. 4)

And I went in unto the prophetess and she conceived and bore a son. And Jehovah said, Call his name Maher-shalal-hash-baz (Swift booty speedy prey); for before the boy knows how to cry, 'My father' and 'My mother,' they

will carry off the riches of Damascus and the spoil of Samaria before the king of Assyria.

12. The ruin of Damascus (17 1-3)

Soon shall Damascus cease to be a city
And shall lie in ruins forever.
Its cities shall be given up to flocks
And they shall lie down there with none to disturb.
Ephraim shall lose her bulwark,
And Damascus her sovereignty;
And the rest of Aram shall perish;
Like the Israelites shall they be,
Is the oracle of Jehovah of hosts.

13. Sweeping disaster awaiting Northern Israel (4-6)

And in that day shall the glory of Jacob grow dim,
And the fatness of his flesh disappear;
And it shall be as when a harvester gathers standing grain,
And his arms reaps the ears.
Yea, it shall be as when he gleans in the valley of Rephaim,
And the gleanings thereof shall be left as at the beating of an olive tree:
Two or three berries on the topmost branch,
Four or five on the boughs of a fruit tree—
It is the oracle of the God of Israel.

14. Judah also to be a victim of the Assyrian judgment (8 5-8)

Then Jehovah spoke yet further to me, saying:
Because this people have rejected the waters of Shiloah which flow softly,
And are dismayed because of Rezin and the son of Remaliah,
Therefore the Lord is about to bring upon them the waters of the River Euphrates, the mighty and great.
And it shall rise above all its channels and overflow all its banks,
And it shall sweep onward into Judah, shall overflow and pass over it, reaching even to the neck,
And its outstretching wings shall cover the breadth of thy land, O Immanuel.

For thus Jehovah said to me, forcibly mastering me and instructing me not to walk in the way of this people: 15. The only sufficient cause for Judah's fear (11-15)

Call ye not conspiracy all that this people calleth conspiracy.
What they fear do not fear nor be filled with dread.
Jehovah of hosts, him regard as the conspirator!
Let him be your fear and your dread!
For he will be a stumbling block and a stone to strike against,
And a rock of stumbling to both the houses of Israel,
A trap and a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem.
Many among them shall stumble and fall,
And they shall be broken and snared and taken.

Binding up the admonition and sealing the instruction among my disciples, I will wait for Jehovah who is hiding his face from the house of Jacob, and in him will I trust. Behold, I and the children whom Jehovah hath given me are signs and symbols in Israel from Jehovah of hosts who dwells in Mount Zion. 16. Isaiah's disciples the one hope for the future (16-17)

But Ahaz sent messengers to Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria, saying, I am your servant and your son; come up and deliver me from the power of the king of Aram and from the power of the king of Israel, who have attacked me. Then Ahaz took the silver and gold that were found in the temple of Jehovah and in the treasures of the royal palace, and sent it as a present to the king of Assyria. And the king of Assyria listened to him. So the king of Assyria went up against Damascus and took it and carried its inhabitants captive to Kir and put Rezin to death. 17. Ahaz's tribute to Assyria (II K. 16 7-9)

Now when King Ahaz went to Damascus to meet Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria, he saw there the altar that was at Damascus. Then King Ahaz sent to Urijah the priest a model of the altar and a pattern of all the details of its construction. And Urijah the priest built an altar, exactly corresponding to what King Ahaz had sent from Damascus; even thus Urijah the priest made it before King Ahaz re- 18. The heathen altar introduced by Ahaz (10-16)

turned from Damascus. And when the king returned from Damascus and saw the altar, the king drew near to the altar, went up on it, and burnt his burnt-offering and his cereal-offering, and poured out his libation on the altar. And the brazen altar, which stood before Jehovah, he brought from the front of the temple, from between his altar and the temple of Jehovah, and put it on the north side of his altar. And King Ahaz commanded Urijah the priest, saying, On the great altar burn the morning burnt-offering and the evening cereal-offering and the king's burnt-offering and his cereal-offering, with the burnt-offering of all the people of the land, and their cereal-offering and their libations, and sprinkle upon it all the blood of the burnt-offering and all the blood of the sacrifice; but the brazen altar shall be for me to inquire by. Thus did Urijah the priest, just as King Ahaz commanded.

19. Other changes in the temple (17. 18)

King Ahaz also cut off the border-frames of the stands and removed the laver from them; he also took down the sea from the brazen oxen that were under it, and put it upon a stone pedestal. And the covered way for the sabbath, that they had built in the temple, and the outer entrance for the king, he sent away from the temple of Jehovah for the sake of the king of Assyria.

20. End of Ahaz's reign (19. 20)

Now the other acts of Ahaz which he did, are they not recorded in the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah? And Ahaz slept with his fathers and was buried with his fathers in the city of David. And Hezekiah his son became king in his place.

21. Hezekiah's good policy (18 1-3. 8)

In the third year of Hoshea the son of Elah king of Israel, Hezekiah the son of Ahaz king of Judah began to reign. He was twenty-five years old when he began to reign; and he reigned twenty-nine years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Abijah the daughter of Zechariah. And he did that which pleased Jehovah, just as David his ancestor had done. He drove back the Philistines to Gaza and conquered its territory from the watch-tower to the fortified city.

I. **The Political Situation.** When Pekah mounted the throne of Northern Israel, after assassinating the reigning king, his avowed

policy was to throw off the yoke of Assyria (*cf.* § LXXII). To this end he formed an alliance with Damascus; and these two northern Palestinian states soon set about forming a coalition of the neighboring peoples to check the advance of Tiglath-pileser IV. Already this energetic usurper of the Assyrian throne had revealed his ability and ambition. To the well-informed statesmen of the day it must have been apparent that it was futile for the petty states of Palestine to oppose him.

Hitherto, little Judah had been protected by its remoteness and insignificance from close relations with Assyria. Public opinion evidently favored a continuation of this policy; but when Ahaz refused to join the league against Assyria, Judah was threatened with invasion. In the light of the situation three possibilities presented themselves: (1) Ahaz might submit to the demands of the Northern Israelites and Arameans; but in so doing he would declare himself an open foe of Assyria. (2) He might throw himself into the hands of Assyria and trust the Assyrian armies to save him from the attack of his immediate neighbors. (3) He might refuse to make any alliances and wait for the future to disclose the wisest policy.

II. **Isaiah's Advice to Ahaz.** It was at the crisis, when the northern foes were reported as rapidly advancing and the king was inspecting the water supply of the city, probably with a view to putting it into a state of defence, that the young Isaiah sought out the king in order to communicate to him the prophetic counsel. The date of this memorable interview with Ahaz was about 735 B.C. The scene was near the upper pool, probably in the lower Tyropœan valley, south of Jerusalem. Isaiah's aim was to influence Ahaz not to submit to the demands of Israel and Damascus, but rather to trust calmly in Jehovah and to enter into no entangling alliances. His estimate of the strength of these northern invaders was entirely just, and the figure which he employed in describing them was strong and apt. While their preparations to oppose Assyria and to force Judah to join them seemed formidable, they had little real strength or resources, as the event proved, and were destined within two or three years to go down in ruin before the armies of Tiglath-pileser IV. In holding fast to its traditional policy and in an abiding faith in Jehovah alone lay Judah's way of deliverance.

III. **Isaiah's Sign to Ahaz.** In his zeal to convince the king of the truth of his prophetic message, Isaiah used language which must be interpreted as figurative and hyperbolical. It is impossible to believe that he offered literally to bring about forthwith an earthquake or an eclipse, should it be asked for, in order to strengthen the wavering faith

of the king. The simplicity of the sign which follows indicates that the statement was but Isaiah's method of making his message graphic and impressive and of expressing his absolute faith in the God whose glory filled the whole earth. The reply of Ahaz revealed to Isaiah the fact that the king did not wish to be impressed, and aroused the suspicion—which later events proved to be true—that in order to save himself from the attack of his immediate foes, Ahaz was already entering into cowardly negotiations with Tiglath-pileser. Isaiah's distrust of the king is revealed in his indignant denunciation of Ahaz's refusal to ask a sign. The sign which Isaiah then gave him was evidently intended to impress two facts upon the mind of the king: (1) that the events predicted would transpire soon, and (2) that not only would Judah's foes, Aram and Israel, be speedily destroyed at the hands of the Assyrians, but that Judah also would suffer the consequences of its cowardly policy.

The Greek translators (in using the word, *virgin*) and later interpreters have unfortunately obscured the original meaning of this sign. To make his message clear and graphic, the prophet simply stated that a young woman—possibly some one present in his audience, or else the wife of the prophet or the king—should bear a son and that his name might appropriately be called Immanuel. The meaning of the name, *God with us,* expresses the firm faith which guided Isaiah at this and other great crises in Judah's history. It was for lack of this faith that the king and people were committing a fatal error. As a result of their criminal folly, this child to be born, whose name was so full of promise, should himself suffer, while yet an infant, in common with his people, the painful consequences of Assyrian conquest. As a fugitive in the wilderness, he would be forced to subsist on the simple food which that life afforded, even curds and wild honey.

IV. **Effects of the Assyrian Advance.** In the extracts which have been preserved from the remainder of Isaiah's address there is pictured, in a series of bold oracles abounding in striking imagery, the appalling fate which would overtake Judah in common with the other states of Palestine. In one picture the Assyrians are represented as coming like great swarms of flies and bees and settling down on all parts of the land. In another they are compared to a razor with which Jehovah will destroy the inhabitants of his land, so that the few fugitives who escape shall be forced to live on curds and wild honey, and the fertile cultivated lands shall become a howling wilderness, the haunt of hunters and of shepherds with their flocks.

V. **Isaiah's Object Lessons.** A patriot prophet, like Isaiah, was not content merely to proclaim his messages to the king. From the obdurate king and princes he appealed to the people, and spared no effort to impress his all-important message upon them. On a tablet, which he probably set up in the precincts of the temple, he wrote an inscription which briefly formulated his teaching at this time. Its meaning was that if Ahaz persisted in his policy of throwing himself into the hands of Assyria, rather than of trusting in Jehovah, Judah would soon experience the horrors of foreign conquest. Adopting the method of Hosea, he gave to the baby boy who was born to him at this time, not the name Immanuel but Maher-shalal-hash-baz, which conveyed the same urgent note of warning.

From the same period, or probably a little earlier, came the stirring oracles of the seventeenth chapter of Isaiah's prophecies, the first two of which proclaim the speedy and complete overthrow of Damascus and Northern Israel.

VI. **The Consequences of Ahaz's Policy.** In the address found in the latter part of the eighth chapter of his prophecies, Isaiah directly addresses the people. In their terror before the two northern kings, the Judahites had not only lost faith in Jehovah's beneficent, protecting care, symbolized by the softly flowing waters of the pool of Siloam to the south of Jerusalem; but by their foolish policy they had incurred Jehovah's indignant wrath. Like the River Euphrates at flood time, when it was fed with the melting mountain snows, the Assyrians would come at Jehovah's command, sweeping over Aram and Northern Israel and inundating the land of Judah itself.

From his blind, terror-stricken, insensate countrymen, Isaiah turned with confidence to the faithful few who had accepted his teaching. He realized that they and the members of his own family were the repository of those great, illuminating truths which would yet bring freedom and deliverance to his nation. For the present they alone must treasure his teachings until different rulers and counsels should prevail in Judah.

The future proved the truth of Isaiah's words. The people continued to put their trust in the mediums and the wizards and the representatives of the ancient heathen cults, instead of heeding the practical, living message of the prophet. Ahaz paid homage in person to Tiglath-pileser IV at Damascus, and Judah soon felt the hard heel of Assyria. In his zeal to ape foreign customs the king even introduced at Jerusalem itself an altar, modelled after the Assyrian type which he had seen at Damascus. The heavy tribute imposed by the Assyrians upon Judah

produced a strong reaction against the policy of Ahaz, and during the next century the Hebrews learned to their horror what it meant to be both subjects and foes of Assyria.

§ LXXVII. THE GREAT CRISIS OF 701 B.C.

1. Isaiah's symbolic prophecy (Is. 20 1. 2)

In the year that the Tartan came to Ashdod, sent by Sargon, king of Assyria, and attacked Ashdod and captured it—at that time Jehovah spoke through Isaiah, the son of Amoz, saying, Go and loose the sackcloth from off thy loins and thy sandal from off thy foot. And he did so, going naked and barefoot.

2. Its meaning: captivity for all who defy Assyria (3-6)

And Jehovah said, Just as my servant Isaiah hath gone naked and barefoot three years as a sign and a warning to Egypt and Ethiopia, so will the king of Assyria lead away the captives of Egypt and the exiles of Ethiopia, youths and old men, naked and barefoot, with their bodies exposed. And they who look to Ethiopia and boast of Egypt shall be dismayed and put to shame. And the inhabitants of this coast-land shall say in that day, 'Behold, if such is the fate of those to whom we looked and to whom we fled for help to be delivered from the king of Assyria, how can we ourselves escape?'

3. Hezekiah's attitude toward the Babylonian rebel (II K. 20 12. 13)

At that time Merodach-baladan, the son of Baladan king of Babylon, also sent eunuchs with a present to Hezekiah; for he had heard that Hezekiah had been sick. And Hezekiah was glad to see them, and showed them all his treasure-house, the silver, the gold, the spices, the precious oil, and his armory and all that was found among his treasures; there was nothing in his palace nor in all his dominion that Hezekiah did not show them.

4. Isaiah's condemnation of Hezekiah's action (14-19)

Then Isaiah the prophet came to King Hezekiah and said to him, What did these men say? and from whence, pray, do they come to you? And Hezekiah said, They have come from a far country, from Babylon. And he said, What have they seen in your palace? And Hezekiah answered, They have seen all that is in my palace; there is nothing among my treasures that I did not show them. Then Isaiah said to Hezekiah: Hear the word of Jehovah, 'The

days are quickly coming, when all that is in your palace and that which your fathers have stored up to this day shall be carried to Babylon—nothing shall be left,' saith Jehovah. 'And of your sons who shall issue from you, whom you shall beget, shall they take away to be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon.' Then Hezekiah said to Isaiah, Good is the word of Jehovah which you have spoken. For he thought, As long as I live there shall be peace and stability.

5. Corruption of Judah's guides (Is. 28 7. 8)

The rulers in Jerusalem stagger with wine and reel with strong drink;
Priest and prophet stagger with strong drink,
They reel when they have a vision and totter when they render a decision.
All tables are full of vomit—filth in every place!

6. Their contempt for Isaiah's reiterated warnings (9. 10)

Whom [they say] would he teach knowledge and to whom make clear the revelation?
To those who are just weaned from the milk and drawn from the breast?
For it is precept upon precept, and precept upon precept,
Line upon line, and line upon line, here a little and there a little.

7. Assyria to teach them to appreciate Jehovah's care (11. 12)

Yea, through a gibbering speech and a foreign tongue
Jehovah will surely speak to this people—who said to them,
This is the true rest; grant rest to the weary;
And this is the true refreshing! but they are not willing to hear.

8. Harsh experience to impress the lesson (13)

Therefore Jehovah's words shall be to them, precept upon precept, and precept upon precept,
Line upon line, line upon line; here a little and there a little,
So that, as they go, they shall stumble backward,
And they shall be broken, and ensnared and taken.

9. The future to prove the futility of alliance and the value of faith (14-18)

Therefore hear the word of Jehovah, ye scornful men,
Ye rulers of this people which is in Jerusalem:
Because ye have said, 'We have entered into a treaty with death,
And with Sheol we have made a contract;
When the overwhelming scourge comes on it shall not reach us,
For we have made a lie our trust and in falsehood we have taken refuge,'
Therefore, thus saith the Lord Jehovah,
Behold, I lay in Zion a tried stone,
A precious corner stone as a sure foundation;
He who believes shall not be moved.
And I will make justice the measuring line and righteousness the plummet,
And hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and waters shall overflow the hiding place.
And your covenant with death shall be broken,
And your compact with Sheol shall not stand;
When the overwhelming scourge passes over you, ye shall be trampled down thereby.

10. Crime of disregarding Jehovah's will (30 1-3)

Woe to the rebellious sons, is the oracle of Jehovah,
Carrying out a plan which is not mine,
Establishing a treaty contrary to my spirit,
So that they heap sin upon sin;
Who would set out for Egypt without asking my decision,
To flee to the shelter of Pharaoh,
And to seek refuge in the shadow of Egypt.
The shelter of Pharaoh will be your shame,
And the refuge in the shadow of Egypt your confusion.

11. Egypt no help but a snare (4-7)

For though the princes are in Zoan
And his messengers reach Hanes,
They shall all be put to shame by a people which profits them nothing,
A people which brings no help, but only shame and disgrace.

Among the beasts of the south country, in the land of trouble and distress,
Of the roaring lion and lioness, the viper and flying dragon,
They carry their wealth on the backs of asses,
And their treasure upon the humps of camels
To a people which cannot profit, even Egypt,
Whose help is only vanity and nothingness.
Therefore I name this nation, ' the quelled monster.

12. Defiant, obdurate attitude of the nation (8-11)

Now go in, write it down and on a book inscribe it,
That it may be for later times a witness forever,
For it is a rebellious people, lying sons,
Sons who will not heed Jehovah's instruction,
Who say to the seers, See not!
And to those who have visions, Give us no vision of what is right!
Speak to us what is agreeable, give us false visions!
Turn from the way, go aside from the path,
Trouble us no more with ' Israel's Holy One.'

13. Its inevitable consequences (12-14)

Therefore, thus saith the Holy One of Israel, Because ye reject this word,
And trust in perverseness and crookedness and rely thereon,
Therefore this guilty act shall be to you
Like a bulging breach in a high wall about to fall.
Suddenly, in an instant will come its destruction,
Yea, its destruction shall be as when one dashes an earthen vessel in pieces, shattering it ruthlessly,
So that not a potsherd is found among the pieces
With which to take up fire from the hearth or to draw water from a cistern.

14. Judah's true policy and its fatal folly (15-17)

For thus, saith the Lord Jehovah, Israel's Holy One,
By repenting and remaining quiet ye shall be delivered,
In resting and trusting shall your strength consist.
But ye refused and said: Nay,
On horses will we ride. Therefore shall ye flee!
And, On swift steeds will we ride. Therefore your pursuers shall be swift!

Each thousand shall flee at the war-cry of one,
From the war-cry of five ye shall flee till ye are but a remnant,
Like a pole on the top of a mountain and like a signal on a hill.

15. Egypt a vain deliverer (31 1-4)

Woe to those who go down to Egypt for help,
Who rely on horses and on chariots because they are many,
And who trust in horsemen because they are many,
But who look not to Israel's Holy One nor consult Jehovah!
But he also is wise and brings calamity and does not recall his words,
He will arise against the house of evil-doers and against the helper of transgressors.
Yea, the Egyptians are men and not God and their horses are flesh, not spirit,
Jehovah will stretch out his hand so that the helper shall stumble,
And the helped one shall also fall, and they shall all go down together.
For this hath Jehovah said to me:
'As a lion or a young lion growls over his prey,
When all the shepherds are summoned against him,
But at their shouting is not terrified and at their noise not daunted;
So shall Jehovah of hosts come down to battle against the mount and hill of Zion.'

16. Folly and ingratitude of Jehovah's people (1 2-4)

Hear, O heavens, and give heed, O earth, for Jehovah speaketh:
Sons have I reared and placed on high, but they have proved false to me.
The ox knows its owner and the ass its master's crib
While Israel has no knowledge, my people no insight!
Ah! sinful nation, people deep-laden with guilt,
Race of evil-doers, perverse children! They have forsaken Jehovah,
They have spurned Israel's Holy One, they have become rebellious.

17. Judah's pitiable condition (5-9)

On what place can you yet be smitten since you still go on rebelling?
The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint,
From the sole of the foot to the head there are only wounds and bruises and fresh blows,
Which have not been pressed nor bound up nor softened with oil.
Your land is a desolation, your cities are burned with fire,
Your tilled land before your eyes—aliens are devouring it,
And the daughter of Zion is left like a booth in a vineyard,
Like a lodge in a field of cucumbers, like a watch-tower.
Unless Jehovah of hosts had left us a remnant,
We would have been just as Sodom, we would have been like Gomorrah.

18. Uselessness of the various forms of ceremonial offerings (10-14)

Hear Jehovah's message, ye chieftains of Sodom,
Give heed to the instruction of your God, ye people of Gomorrah:
What care I for the vast number of your sacrifices? saith Jehovah.
I am sated with burnt-offerings of rams and the fat of fed beasts,
And in the blood of bullocks and lambs and he-goats I take no pleasure.
When ye appear before me—who has required this of you?
To trample my courts—bring no more offerings.
Vain is the sweet odor of the sacrifice—it is an abomination to me;
New moon and sabbath, the calling of assemblies—
I am not able to endure a fast and a solemn meeting.
Your new moons and your appointed days my soul hateth.
They are a burden to me; I am tired of bearing it.

19. Justice and mercy alone acceptable to Jehovah (15-17)

When ye spread forth your hands I will hide mine eyes from you.
Also, if ye make many prayers, I will not hear.
Your hands are stained with blood; wash, that ye may be clean;
Remove the evil of your deeds from before mine eyes.
Cease to do evil; learn to do good;

Seek justice; relieve the oppressed;
Vindicate the orphan; plead for the widow.

20. Contrition and the only basis of forgiveness (18-20)

Come now, let us agree together, saith Jehovah;
Though your sins be as scarlet, they may become white as snow;
Though they be red as crimson, they may become as wool;
If ye willingly yield and are obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land,
But if ye refuse and resist, ye shall be devoured by the sword;
For the mouth of Jehovah hath spoken it!

21. Degeneracy of rulers and people (21-23)

O how hath she become an harlot, the faithful city,
Zion which was full of justice, where righteousness abode!
Thy silver is changed to dross, thy wine is mixed with water,
Thy rulers are unruly and companions of thieves,
All of them love bribes and are running after fees,
They do not vindicate the orphan, and the cause of the widow doth not affect them.

22. The thorough purification of the nation (24-26)

Therefore this is the oracle of the Lord, Jehovah of hosts:
'Aha! I will vent my displeasure on my foes and take vengeance on mine enemies;
And I will turn my hand against thee and burn away thy dross in the furnace,
And I will take away all thine alloy,
I will make again thy rulers as at the first and thy counsellors as at the beginning;
Afterwards thou shalt be called Citadel of Righteousness, Faithful City.'

23. Hezekiah's measures to avert attack (II K. 18 13-16)

Now in the fourteenth year of King Hezekiah, Sennacherib king of Assyria came up against all the fortified cities of Judah and took them. And Hezekiah king of Judah sent to the king of Assyria to Lachish, saying, I have offended; withdraw from me; whatever you lay on me I will bear. And the king of Assyria made Hezekiah king of Judah pay three hundred talents of silver and thirty talents of gold. And Hezekiah gave him all the silver that was found in the

temple of Jehovah and in the treasures of the royal palace. At that time Hezekiah stripped the doors of the temple of Jehovah and the pillars, which Hezekiah king of Judah had overlaid, and gave [the gold] to the king of Assyria.

I. **The Spirit of Unrest in Palestine.** Ahaz died about 715 B.C., leaving Judah under the heel of the Assyrian conqueror. The payment of the heavy tribute which was demanded soon proved a galling burden to the different states of Palestine. Between 721 and 710 B.C., Merodach-baladan, of the Babylonian kingly line, successfully rebelled against Assyria and ruled in the lower Tigris-Euphrates valley. His success undoubtedly influenced other tributary states of the great Assyrian empire to endeavor to throw off the hated yoke. Egypt also had recently been conquered by a certain Shabaka, an Ethiopian, whose ambitions extended beyond Africa to southwestern Asia. Recognizing that Assyria was his natural rival, he sent emissaries to incite the Palestinian states to rebellion. The result was that throughout the Assyrian empire, and especially along the Mediterranean seaboard, the spirit of discontent and rebellion prevailed, affecting not only the common people, but even the rulers of Judah.

II. **Isaiah's Activity in 711 B.C.** The connection between Philistia and Egypt had always been close. At this period the Philistine cities were at the height of their prosperity. It was natural, therefore, that the standard of revolt should first be raised in that quarter. Judah's nearest neighbors, the cities of Ashdod and Gath, took the initiative. In the face of a common danger, racial barriers had largely broken down in Palestine and the different peoples were in the closest communication with each other. From the inscription of the Assyrian king Sargon, it appears that in this critical year of 711 B.C., Judah, as well as Edom, Moab and Philistia, sent presents to the Pharaoh of Egypt in order to secure his help. Judah was evidently on the point of defying Assyria.

It was at this crisis that Isaiah by his words and dramatic action apparently saved his nation from fatally compromising itself. We are told that he threw off his prophet's mantle and sandals, and went for three years barefoot and in the garb of a captive, as a dramatic object lesson to the people of Judah of the fate that would overtake them should they rebel against Assyria.

When the Assyrian army appeared in Philistia under the leadership of a military commander or *turtanu* (referred to as the Tartan in the biblical narrative), the rebellious Philistine cities were quickly conquered

and the chief offenders were transported. Judah and the other states of Palestine gave assurances of their loyalty, and peace was re-established. In 710 B.C., Sargon also conquered Babylonia and drove Merodach-baladan into exile, so that until the death of the great king, peace prevailed throughout the great Assyrian empire.

III. **The Embassy of Merodach-baladan.** The death of Sargon, in 705 B.C., was the cause of great rejoicing among the vassal states of Assyria, and the occasion for many uprisings. Merodach-baladan reappeared and again instigated a successful revolt in Babylonia. To strengthen his position, this Babylonian rebel sent his representatives to the different vassal states of the empire, seeking to influence them to join with him in his contest with Sennacherib who had succeeded his father Sargon. The biblical narrative records the arrival of these representatives in Jerusalem, and their favorable reception by Hezekiah. Isaiah, however, at once recognized the danger and denounced Hezekiah for giving any encouragement to these representatives of a king who was then in open rebellion against Assyria. In the prophet's mind an alliance with any other than Jehovah, the God of the Hebrew race was treasonable; and rebellion against Assyria meant destruction. Forces and circumstances, however, were at work in Palestine which Isaiah could not control. Apparently he again stood alone, opposed by court and people, as he set before himself the task of again saving Judah from entangling alliances.

IV. **Isaiah's Counsels in the Years 703—1 B.C.** In chapters 28^{7}–31^{4} are preserved extracts from the stirring sermons which Isaiah preached during these critical years. They reflect the contempt and taunts with which his earnest, sane counsels were received by the rulers of his people. They complain that his words are simply *çav la-çav, çav la-çav; qav la-qav, qav la-qav*, a constant reiteration of the same monotonous gabble. For men bent on rebellion and disgusted with the burden of foreign tribute, Isaiah's plain, reiterated statement of what would be the consequences of rebellion was in the highest degree distasteful. To these contemptuous words Isaiah could only respond that Judah's rulers and spiritual leaders were but drunken, and that their power of vision was hopelessly dulled. Since they had failed to listen and to perceive that true peace was to be secured not through diplomacy and dangerous alliances, but by putting their faith in the God who alone could deliver, they must learn this lesson from the lips and from the cruel acts of the foreign conqueror. When they should be crushed by national calamity, they would appreciate the truth of the prophet's plain message.

A calm, serene, abiding faith in the Holy One, who was ever ready to protect and deliver his beloved city, was the only sure foundation, Isaiah asserted, on which the rulers of Judah should base their policy. The Egyptian alliance was fatal, for it would only bring certain calamity upon the nation. The attitude of the scornful rulers compelled Jehovah, strange and distasteful as was the task, to rise in judgment against his own beloved people.

Of the inherent weakness of the Egyptians, Isaiah was well aware. In his eyes their numbers and promises counted for nothing. The prophet's heart was breaking, as he saw his countrymen putting their trust in this weak arm of flesh and thereby spurning and defying the omnipotent God who was eagerly awaiting an opportunity to deliver his people.

V. **Judah's Fate.** In the perspective of history the superlative wisdom of Isaiah's counsel is clearly apparent. If his policy of "quietness and trust" had prevailed, Judah would not have been delivered from Assyrian tribute, but it would have escaped humiliation and the horrors of the "overwhelming scourge" and conquest which swept over it.

The states of Tyre, Judah, Edom, Moab, Ammon, the Philistine cities and certain of the neighboring Bedouin tribes all united in a great alliance against Assyria. Hezekiah of Judah and Luli of Tyre were the leaders in the rebellion. Egypt promised to support them, and in the east they anticipated the co-operation of Merodach-baladan.

Like all loose coalitions of this character, its weakness was quickly demonstrated. Merodach-baladan fell in 704 B.C., before the forces of Sennacherib, whose second expedition was directed against the Kassites in the Zagros mountains to the east. By 701 B.C., the Assyrian king was free to turn against the rebels in the west. Instead of uniting their forces, the allied states attempted, each to defend its own territory, and as a result they fell in rapid succession before the well-disciplined, powerful Assyrian army. With the exception of Tyre, which refused to surrender, the coast towns of Phœnicia and Philistia quickly hastened to pay tribute. The northern leader of the rebellion, Luli king of Tyre, fled into exile. Near Eltekeh in southern Philistia Sennacherib met and defeated the Egyptian army which had been sent to the relief of the Palestinian states.

It was the first time that the two great empires of the east and the west had met face to face, and the overwhelming strength of the one and the pitiable weakness of the other were clearly revealed. Egypt at this time had no standing army and the ill-organized forces which Shabaka sent under his nephew Tarhaka (who later became king of Egypt) were able

to offer little resistance to Sennacherib's powerful forces. Meantime the kings of Edom, Moab and Ammon had submitted. Upon Judah fell the heavy chastisement which Sennacherib meted out to rebels. The conqueror himself states that:

Hezekiah of Judah who had not submitted to my yoke, forty-six of his fortified towns, together with the innumerable fortresses and small towns in their neighborhood, with assault and battering-rams and approach of siege-engines, with the attack of infantry, of mines . . . I besieged and captured. Two hundred thousand, one hundred and fifty persons, young and old, male and female, horses, mules, asses, camels, oxen and sheep, without number, from their midst I brought out and counted them as spoil.

I shut him up like a bird in a cage in the midst of Jerusalem, his royal city. I erected fortifications against him, and those coming forth from the gates of his city I turned back. His cities which I had plundered I cut off from his domain, and gave them to Mitinti king of Ashdod, to Padi king of Ekron, and to Zilbil king of Gaza, and I diminished his territory. To the former payment of their yearly tribute, the tribute of subjection to my sovereignty I added and laid it upon them. The terror of the glory of my lordship overwhelmed Hezekiah himself, and the Arabians and his trusted soldiers, whom he had introduced for the defence of Jerusalem, his royal city, laid down their arms.

Together with thirty talents of gold and eight hundred talents of silver, I caused to be brought after me to Nineveh, my royal city, precious stones, sparkling . . . stones, great lapis lazuli stones, couches of ivory, thrones of state of elephant skins and ivory, . . . wood, whatever there was, an enormous treasure, and his daughters, the women of his palace, his male and female servants (?); and for the payment of tribute and the rendering of homage he despatched his envoy.

VI. **Isaiah's Message to His Afflicted Countrymen.** It was apparently while Assyrian armies were pillaging and burning the cities of Judah, and Hezekiah was shut up like a bird in a cage in the midst of Jerusalem, that Isaiah uttered the memorable address, or series of addresses, found in the first chapter of his prophecy. The picture which he gives of his nation, sick and wounded and bruised, the land a desolation, the cities burned with fire, and Jerusalem left alone like a booth in a vineyard, presents the other side of that boastful description which Sennacherib gives of his conquest of Judah.

The prophet, however, goes deeper and analyzes the causes of Judah's sickness. He places the blame directly upon the leaders of the

nation and upon their false trust in sacrifices and that weary round of ritual which Isaiah realized and declared was only hateful to the holy God who could receive only the worship of a holy people. The prophet saw all too clearly the acts of legalized injustice with which the hands of the rulers were stained. He realized also the utter futility of their blind belief that by the magic blood of sacrifice their sin and its consequences could suddenly be removed. He declared that only by yielding willingly and submissively to Jehovah could they again secure that divine favor and the prosperity for which they longed.

A remnant of Judah survived the "overwhelming scourge." Hezekiah, by the payment of an exorbitant tribute and with the loss of his treasures and members of his own family, retained his position as a vassal of Assyria.

Through all the conflict of contending parties and policies, the clash of world powers and the stress of invasion one man alone saw facts as they were and estimated at their true values the various forces at work in the life of his nation. In vain he advocated the one policy which would have brought deliverance. He met only with rejection and contempt, but he never wavered nor ceased fearlessly to proclaim the truth, and to point out those evils of injustice and lack of faith which were the real cause of Judah's weakness and misfortune. It was the man who had entered into the presence of the Holy One and who had responded to the Divine King's call to service who thus proved himself to be the wisest statesman, the truest patriot, and the most heroic spirit of his age.

§ LXXVIII. MICAH'S SERMONS AND HEZEKIAH'S REFORMATION

1. The summons to judgment (Mi. 1 [2])

Hear ye peoples all;
Give heed, O earth, and all its inhabitants,
For Jehovah hath become a witness against you,
The Lord from his holy temple!

2. Jehovah's advent ([3. 4])

For behold, Jehovah is going forth from his place,
He descendeth and treadeth upon the heights of the earth,
So that the mountains melt beneath,
Like wax in the presence of the fire,
And the valleys break apart,
Like water poured down a steep descent.

3. Guilt of the capitals (5)

For the transgression of Jacob is all this,
And for the sin of the house of Judah.
What was the transgression of Jacob? Was it not Samaria?
What is the sin of Judah? Is it not Jerusalem?

4. Samaria's destruction (6)

Therefore I have made Samaria a ruin that is plowed,
And a place where a vineyard is planted,
And I have poured down her stones into the valley,
And I laid bare her foundations.

5. Fate of her heathen symbols (7)

All her images are shattered,
And all her asherahs are burned with fire,
And all her idols I am laying in ruins,
For from the hire of a harlot were they acquired,
And to the hire of a harlot have they returned.

6. The prophet's lamentation (8)

For this I will mourn and wail,
I will go barefoot and naked,
I will make lamentation like the jackals,
And mourning like the ostriches.

7. The invasion of Judah (9)

For the blow that she has received is incurable,
Indeed, it has come even to Judah!
It extends even to the gate of my people.

8. Warnings and lamentations suggested by the names of the towns thus threatened (10-16)

Tell it not in Gath [Tell-town]!
In Giloh [Exult-town] exult not!
In Bochim [Weep-town] weep!
In Beth-le-aphrah [House of Dust] roll in the dust!
Pass away, O inhabitants of Shaphir [Fair-town], naked!
The inhabitants of Zaanan [March-town] shall not march forth.
Beth-ezel [Nearby-house] shall be taken from its standing-place.
How do the inhabitants of Maroth [Bitterness] wait and wail for good,
For evil hath come down from Jehovah to the gates of Jerusalem.

Harness the horse to the chariot, O inhabitants of Lachish [Horse-town],
For in thee are found the crimes of Israel.
Therefore thou shalt give parting gifts to Moresheth-gath,
Beth-achzib [House of Deception] is a deception to the kings of Israel;
Again I will bring to you the conqueror, O inhabitants of Mareshah,
The glory of Israel is perished forever,
Make thee bald and shave thee for thy darlings,
Like the vultures, make broad thy baldness, for they go into captivity from thee.

I also said:

9. Prophet's appeal to the rulers (3 1, 2)

Hear now, O heads of Jacob,
And ye judges of the house of Israel.
Is it not your duty to know what is the right?
Haters of that which is good and lovers of evil!

10. Their pitiless greed (3)

They devour the flesh of my people,
And their hide they strip from off them,
And break in pieces and serve up their bones,
As in a pot or as meat in the cooking-pan.

11. Their false faith (4)

Then they cry out to Jehovah
But he will not pay heed to them,
And he will hide his face from them at that time,
Because they have committed such crimes.

12. The false, mercenary prophets (5, 6)

Therefore Jehovah saith to the prophets, who lead my people astray,
Who, when they have anything between their teeth, declare peace,
But against anyone who puts nothing in their mouths, they proclaim a holy war!
Therefore, night shall overtake you so that ye shall have no vision,
And darkness so that there shall be no divination;

And the sun shall go down on the prophets,
And the day shall be dark over them.

13. Fate of seers and diviners (7)

The seers will be ashamed,
And the diviners will turn pale,
All of them shall cover the beard,
For there is no answer from God.

14. Micah's divine assurance (8)

But I, on the contrary, am full of power,
And the sense of justice and strength,
To make known to Jacob his crime,
And to Israel his sin.

15. The guilty betrayers of public trust (9, 10)

Hear this, ye heads of the house of Jacob,
And ye judges of the house of Israel,
Ye who spurn justice,
And make all that is straight crooked,
Who build Zion with acts of bloodshed,
And Jerusalem with crime.

16. Their blind confidence (11)

The heads render judgment for a bribe,
And her priests give oracles for a reward,
And her prophets divine for silver;
Yet they lean upon Jehovah and think,
Jehovah is indeed in our midst,
Evil cannot overtake us.

17. Fate that they bring upon the nation (12)

Therefore for your sakes
Zion shall be plowed as a field,
And Jerusalem shall become a heap of ruins,
And the temple mount a wooded height.

18. The popular idea of how to win God's favor (6 c. 7)

With what shall I come before Jehovah,
Bow myself before the God on high?
Shall I come before him with burnt-offerings,
With calves a year old?
Will Jehovah be pleased with thousands of rams,
With myriads of streams of oil?

Shall I give him my first-born for my guilt,
The fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?

It hath been shown thee, O man, what is good;
And what Jehovah ever demands of thee:
Only to do justice and love mercy,
And to walk humbly with thy God.

19. The content of true religion (8)

Hezekiah removed the high places and broke in pieces the pillars and cut down the asherah. And he broke in pieces the brazen serpent that Moses had made; for up to that time the Israelites had offered sacrifices to it; and they called it Nehushtan [The Brazen One].

20. Hezekiah's reforms (II K. 18 4)

I. **The Prophecies of Micah.** The book of Micah falls naturally into four general divisions: (1) a denunciation of the crimes of Israel's rulers, chapters 1 to 3. This section represents the original nucleus which is by all scholars attributed without question to Micah. (2) Predictions of the future deliverance and glory of Jerusalem and of the chosen people, chapters 4 and 5. The style and themes of these chapters are so fundamentally different from those which prevail in the opening section that they are now generally regarded as later exilic or post-exilic additions to the book. (3) The messages of exhortation and warning found in chapters 6^{1}–7^{8}. The subject matter and spirit of this section are very similar to those revealed in the opening chapters and are probably from the prophet of Moresheth-gath. If not, they are from a later spiritual disciple of Micah who was confronted by the same evils as flourished in Judah's early history. (4) The closing section, chapter $7^{9\text{-}20}$, reflects the characteristic ideals and expectations of the exilic and post-exilic period and has little in common with the point of view and interest of the stern prophet of social righteousness.

II. **The Date of Micah's Work.** The date of Micah's activity must be determined from the allusions found in chapters 1 to 3. The superscription to the prophecy is clearly from a later hand, and states that Micah prophesied during the reigns of Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah. These kings represent a period of over half a century (from about 750 to 686 B.C.). From chapter 1 it is evident that the destruction of Samaria, in 722 B.C., was either imminent or had already taken place when the sermon preserved in that chapter was uttered. The current trans-

lations favor the conclusion that Samaria's downfall was still in the future; but the Hebrew verbs may with equal propriety be translated so as to refer to past events. The prophet holds up Samaria's downfall as an impressive warning to the people of Judah and Jerusalem. The detailed references to the nature of Samaria's fate strongly suggest that it had already become a subject of history.

The prophet also sees a dread invader on the point of advancing from the Philistine plain up through the western passes to the conquest of Jerusalem itself. There is no evidence in the inscriptions that the Assyrians even threatened to invade Judah in the years immediately preceding or following the fall of Samaria. Ahaz in 734 B.C. anticipated such an invasion by hastening to submit to the Assyrian king. As has already been noted (§ LXXVII[11]), in 711 B.C. an Assyrian army marched down the Philistine plain to subdue the rebellious city of Ashdod; but Hezekiah's protestations of loyalty again saved Judah from actual invasion. The events connected with the great crisis of 701 B.C., present, however, the natural background for Micah's earnest protest and warning. When the army of Sennacherib swept up from the western plain toward Jerusalem, the truth of the prophet's warnings was amply vindicated. An important reference in Jeremiah 26[18] also states that Micah preached during the reign of Hezekiah and that his sermons bore fruit in the reformation instituted by that king. The national humiliation and distress of the years 703–1 B.C., and the signal confirmation of the ominous predictions of Isaiah and Micah, furnish the most natural background for this reformation. It would seem, therefore, that Micah's work for the most part, like that of Isaiah, gathered about this great crisis in Judah's history, and that Micah was a younger contemporary and possibly a disciple of the great Isaiah.

III. **The Personality and Aims of Micah.** The testimony of the superscription and the local allusions in the latter part of chapter 1 indicate that Micah came from southwestern Judah. His home was Moresheth-gath, a dependency of the old Philistine town of Gath, which had been captured and destroyed by the Aramean king Hazael. Micah's parents perhaps were among the Hebrew colonists settled on the borders of the Philistine plain by King Uzziah, who extended the territory of Judah toward the west. It was probably one of the many little hamlets to be found among the arable foot-hills which lead down from the headlands of Judah to the rolling plains of Philistia. It was a land of fertile fields and pastures, but also a land exposed to constant attack. For centuries the Arabs had come up from the south, as they

do to-day, to pitch their black tents beside the cultivated fields. Across the rolling plains could be seen the strong Philistine cities, and beyond, along the southern shore of the Mediterranean, were the Egyptians.

Micah's home was probably beside the chief valley which led up from the Philistine plain toward Jerusalem. While his interests were local, his outlook was broad. In his exposed outpost, a little above the great coast plain, the peasant of Moresheth had acquired that habit of constant watchfulness and of keenness in detecting and interpreting every new movement on the horizon which is a fundamental characteristic of a true prophet. Therefore, when the rumors came of Assyrian armies moving in the distant north, he quickly and truly saw what their approach would mean to little Judah.

Micah's process of reasoning was simple and direct. Close contact with nature had taught him to reason, like Amos, from cause to effect and from effect back to cause. A great calamity was clearly about to overtake Judah. His task as a prophet was to find out the real cause. That cause he found in the cruelty and oppression of the poor and dependent by the men of wealth and authority and especially by those who guided the national policy at Jerusalem. He had doubtless himself studied conditions in the capital city, not with the dulled vision of one who had been brought up amidst them, but with the eyes of a man fresh from the free, simple life of the country. With clear insight he saw the sinister significance of the flagrant crimes which were perpetrated against the defenceless classes under the shadow of the royal court and sacred temple. Unlike the statesman prophet Isaiah, he had nothing to say regarding the foolish political policies of the king and his advisers. Of these policies Micah probably knew little. They were, however, but evidences of the deeper lying evil—the selfishness, the greedy and mercenary spirit of the rulers who guided Judah during this perilous period. Like Amos, Micah stood up as the tribune of the people. He was stern, uncompromising and fearless. Almost alone he faced the princes, courtiers, and royal priests and prophets of the nation. On the simple authority of justice and his own inspired convictions, he pointed his finger in turn at each of these classes and, in a few pregnant sentences full of burning zeal and indignation, held up before them their crimes in all their heinousness, and then pointed out the inevitable consequences. Undoubtedly he was the most unpopular man of the hour; but in the light of history he shares with Isaiah the honor of being one of Judah's most effective citizens. The simple directness of his appeal

perhaps also explains why he was one of the few prophets whose words were heeded by the men to whom they were first addressed.

IV. **The Judgment Awaiting Guilty Jerusalem.** Micah's recorded sermons open with a general arraignment of both Northern and Southern Israel. Jehovah, as plaintiff and judge, is pictured as coming forth to execute judgment upon the two guilty kingdoms. Samaria's fate, however, is introduced simply as a warning; the prophet's interest all centres in Judah. As he contemplates the disaster about to overtake his beloved nation, he dramatically assumes the rôle of the hired mourning women who wail over the bier of the dead. His words gradually rise to the meter of the lamentation song, powerfully intensifying the effectiveness of his message.

As he looked out from his home among the western foot-hills and saw in imagination the rapid advance of Assyrian hordes, he pictured its effect upon the little towns of Judah. In his thought the very names of these towns suggested the nature of the calamity which should befall them. Like the names given to the children of Hosea and Isaiah, they would ever after be grim reminders of the doom that was impending. Certain of these villages have not yet been identified, but from those whose sites are known, it is clear that the prophet began with the western outposts of Judah and in imagination moved eastward along the broad highway which an Assyrian army would naturally follow, until at last it reached the capital city, Jerusalem.

V. **The Guilt of the Leaders of the Nation.** The world's literature contains no stronger invective than that which Micah hurled at those who stood as the civil and religious heads of the nation. From the point of view of one in the ranks he saw the woful consequences of their acts. "Cannibals," he called them, and he developed his figure with an appalling realism. Unhesitatingly he stripped from their faces the veil of false, hypocritical faith with which they were seeking to hide from their vision Jehovah's just indignation and declared that their crimes unchecked would bring utter ruin to their nation.

In their fatal policy of self-deception, the rulers of Judah were encouraged by the mercenary prophets who prophesied under the inspiration of gold rather than of the divine spirit of truth working in them. With fine sarcasm Micah declared that from these pitiably degenerate representatives of a noble order a bribe would secure a prediction of boundless peace and prosperity; while upon him who withheld the customary gift they were ready to call down curses from heaven. To such

hypocrites Jehovah's message was not peace nor a glorious vision, but only disaster and well-merited judgment.

In contrast to these base prophets—who doubtless prophesied in the same terms and claimed the same divine authority—Micah declared that he possessed that spirit of impartial justice and divine power which enabled him to point out clearly and fearlessly the crimes which were threatening the life of his nation. The character of his words and the subsequent course of Judah's history fully vindicate his claims. Micah brings into striking contrast that growing class of false or self-deceived prophets, who ultimately lured Judah on to its ruin, and the few faithful prophets, like himself, who were responsive to the divine voice within them, to the highest ideals of their race and age, and to the needs which called them to action. The one class bowed slavishly to existing authority, and became the servants of their own selfish ambition. The other class acknowledged but one supreme authority. In serving God and their fellowmen they forgot their own personal interest. Thus in losing their life they found it.

VI. **The Reformation of Hezekiah.** Micah predicted the complete destruction of Jerusalem and its temple of holy memories; but as a matter of fact the city survived and was inhabited long after the death of those to whom the prophet spoke. It is clear that the conditional element, which underlies every prediction of doom, even though not expressed, was clearly understood by Micah and his hearers. The narrative in Jeremiah $26^{18, 19}$ also states that Hezekiah and the rulers of Judah heeded these words of Micah, thereby changing the conditions upon which his prophecy was based and averted for a century or more the consequences of the crimes which ultimately proved Judah's destruction.

The reference in the book of Kings to the reformation of Hezekiah is exceedingly unsatisfactory. Even the date is not clearly stated. The course of Judah's history and especially the testimony of the prophetic books strongly suggest that it was instituted immediately after the national distress and humiliation of the year 701 B.C. Up to that date the sermons of both Isaiah and Micah are filled with bitter denunciations of existing evils, with no suggestion that these evils had been at all abated. The catastrophes of 701 B.C. completely destroyed the false hopes and beliefs of the blind leaders of the people and signally confirmed the principles maintained by Isaiah and Micah. The occasion, therefore, was eminently favorable for a reformation. The high esteem with which Isaiah was regarded by court and people after 701 also indicate that his

words at last had gained partial acceptance, probably in connection with Hezekiah's reformation.

The late prophetic editor of Kings makes the sweeping statement that Hezekiah removed the high places and broke in pieces the pillars and cut down the asherah. Isaiah, it is true, had repeatedly denounced the prevailing idolatry, and with the religious cults practised at the high places he had no sympathy; but there is no evidence that he recognized any fundamental distinction between the religious rites at the high places and at the royal sanctuary at Jerusalem. The abolition of the local high places was rather the work of the later reformers led by Jŏsiah (*cf.* § LXXXIII). The basis of the late prophetic editor's statement is probably to be found in the quotation from the older record which follows. It states that Hezekiah destroyed the brazen serpent, evidently a survival from the earlier totemistic cults, and by later tradition associated with Moses (*cf.* Vol. I, § XXIX). Other public idols may also have shared the same fate. The act reveals the awakening public consciousness and the more general realization, under the influence of the true prophets, that Jehovah was a God of spirit and therefore not to be represented by symbols of metal and wood.

The reference in Jeremiah 26 to Micah's preaching implies that Hezekiah's reformation was more fundamental than the narrative in Kings suggests. It states that Hezekiah and his people heeded the words of Micah. But Micah had little, if anything, to say about religious forms. He demanded instead a thorough social reformation. It is probable, therefore, that Hezekiah took active measures, in the period of reconstruction which followed the calamities of 701 B.C., to correct the more glaring social abuses which were undermining the nation. In the legislation of Deuteronomy, which comes from the following century, many definite laws are formulated with the aim of correcting permanently these social evils and of protecting the rights of the poor, the widow, the orphan, and the defenceless. In his latest recorded activity, Isaiah says nothing about the social evils which had commanded so much of his attention in the earlier days. Rather his words of promise and assurance imply that the rulers and people had amended their ways and were living in accordance with the divine principles of justice and right. Also in the sermons of the prophets who followed Isaiah social problems cease to occupy the central place, indicating that Hezekiah's reformation marked a distinct advance in the social development of Judah and that at last the revolutionizing social teachings of the

great reformers of the Assyrian period had found a response in the popular conscience.

VII. **The Essentials of Religion.** The fundamental contrast between the popular religion and the religion of the true prophets is forcibly brought out in the classic passage found in the sixth chapter of Micah. Even though the actual words may come from a later disciple, they voice the teachings of the peasant prophet from Moresheth. The people, perhaps as a result of the distressing experiences of 701 B.C., have been moved to penitence. Retaining the older ceremonial conception of religion, they are represented as asking whether by the profusion of their offerings or even by the sacrifice of their dearest offspring they can again secure Jehovah's favor. Quick comes the response which embodies the essential message of the noblest prophetic teachers throughout the ages. Forms and ceremonies are ignored. What Jehovah demands of each man and nation is that they ever act in accord with the principles of impartial justice, cherish a commanding love and tenderness toward others which shall find expression in every thought and deed, and worship and serve the Eternal Father in a spirit of trusting dependence. Even though the race failed to appreciate the fact, Israel's religion had at last become universal and was defined as a personal, ethical, loving relation between man and his God and his fellowmen —a way of living and doing, not a form of worship or belief

§ LXXIX. JERUSALEM'S DELIVERANCE THROUGH ISAIAH'S COUNSELS

1. Assyria formerly Jehovah's agent of judgment (Is. 10 5, 6)

Woe, Assher, rod of mine anger,
The staff in whose hand is mine indignation.
Against an impious nation am I wont to send him.
And against the people of my wrath I give him a charge,
To take spoil and gather booty,
And to tread them down like the mire in the streets.

2. His base designs against Judah (7-11)

But he—not so doth he plan;
And his heart—not so doth it purpose.
For destruction is in his heart,
And to cut off nations not a few.
For he saith, Are not my princes all of them kings?
Is not Calno as Carchemish?

Is not Hamath as Arpad?
Is not Samaria as Damascus?
As mine hand hath found these kingdoms—
Though their images outnumbered those of Jerusalem and Samaria—
Shall I not, as I have done to Samaria and her idols,
Do likewise to Jerusalem and her images?

3. His boastful pride (13b-14)

By the strength of my hand have I done it,
And by my wisdom, for I have discerned it;
And I have removed the bounds of the peoples,
And I have robbed their treasuries,
And like a mighty man I have brought down those who sit enthroned.
And my hand hath seized, as on a nest,
The riches of the peoples.
And as one gathers eggs that are unguarded,
I, indeed, have carried off all the earth.
And there was none that fluttered the wing,
Or opened the mouth and chirped!

4. But a tool in the hand of Jehovah (15. 24b. c)

Shall the axe vaunt itself over him who heweth therewith?
Or shall the saw magnify itself over him who wields it?
As if a rod should sway him who lifts it,
As if a staff should lift up him who is not wood!
His burden shall be removed from thy shoulder,
And his yoke shall cease from upon thy neck.

5. The rapid advance of the Assyrian army (24d. 28-31)

He has gone up from Rimmon.
He has arrived at Aiath.
He has passed through Migron.
At Michmash he lays up his baggage.
They have gone over the pass.
At Geba they halt for the night.
Ramah trembles.
Gibeah of Saul flees.
Shriek aloud, O people of Gallim.
Harken, O Laishah.
Answer her Anathoth.

Madmenah flees.
The inhabitants of Gebim are fled.

6. Utter destruction before the walls of Jerusalem (32-34)

This very day he halts at Nob.
He shakes his fist against Mount Zion,
Against the hill of Jerusalem.
Behold, the Lord, Jehovah of hosts,
Is lopping the boughs with terror,
And the high of stature are being hewn down,
The lofty are being brought low,
The thickets of the forest are being cut down with an axe;
Lebanon, with its mighty cedars, is falling!

7. Sennacherib's arrogant demand (II K. 18 17-25)

Then the king of Assyria sent the commander-in-chief, and the chief of the eunuchs, and a high official from Lachish with a great army to King Hezekiah at Jerusalem. And they went up, and when they arrived at Jerusalem, they came and stood by the conduit of the upper pool, which is on the way to the fuller's field. And when they called for the king, Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, who was prefect of the palace, and Shebnah the scribe, and Joah the son of Asaph the chancellor came out to them. And the high official said to them, Say now to Hezekiah, 'Thus saith the great king, the king of Assyria, "What confidence is this which you cherish? You indeed think, A simple word of the lips is counsel and strength for the war! Now on whom do you trust, that you have rebelled against me? Indeed you trust on the staff of this bruised reed, even upon Egypt which, if a man lean on it, will go into his hand and pierce it. So is Pharaoh king of Egypt to all who trust in him. But if you say to me, We trust in Jehovah our God, is not he the one whose high places and altars Hezekiah has taken away and has said to Judah and Jerusalem, You shall worship before this altar in Jerusalem? Now therefore give pledges to my master the king of Assyria and I will give you two thousand horses, if you are able on your part to set riders upon them. How then can you repulse one of the least of my master's servants? And yet you trust in Egypt for chariots and for horsemen! Have I now come up against this

place to destroy it without Jehovah's approval? Jehovah it was who said to me, Go up against this land and destroy it."'

8. Request of the Hebrews (26. 27)

Then Eliakim the son of Hilkiah and Shebnah and Joah said to the high official, Speak, I pray you, to your servants in the Aramaic language, for we understand it; but do not speak with us in the Jewish language in the hearing of the people who are on the wall. But the high official said to them, Has my master sent me to your master and to you to speak these words? Is it not rather to the men who sit on the wall, that they shall eat their own dung and drink their own water together with you?

9. Arguments and threats of the Assyrian official (28-35)

Then the high official stood and cried with a loud voice in the Jewish language and spoke, saying, Hear the message of the great king, the king of Assyria. Thus saith the king, 'Let not Hezekiah deceive you; for he will not be able to deliver you out of my hand. Neither let Hezekiah make you trust in Jehovah by saying, "Jehovah will surely deliver us, and this city shall not be given into the power of the king of Assyria."' Hearken not to Hezekiah, for thus says the king of Assyria, 'Make your peace with me and come over to me; thus shall each one of you eat from his own vine and his own fig tree and drink the waters of his own cistern, until I come and take you away to a land like your own land, a land full of grain and new wine, a land full of bread and vineyards, a land full of olive-trees and honey, that you may live and not die. But hearken not to Hezekiah, when he misleads you, saying, "Jehovah will deliver us." Has any of the gods of the nations ever delivered his land out of the power of the king of Assyria? Where are the gods of Hamath and Arpad? Where are the gods of Sepharvaim, Hena, and Ivvah? Where are the gods of the land of Samaria that they have delivered Samaria out of my power? Who are they among all the gods of the countries, that have delivered their country out of my power, that Jehovah should deliver Jerusalem out of my power?'

10. Hezekiah's message to Isaiah (18 36–19 4)

Then the people were silent and answered him not a word; for the king's command was, Answer him not. But Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, the prefect of the palace, and Shebna, the scribe, and Joah the son of Asaph, the chancellor, came to Hezekiah with torn clothes and told him the words of the

high official. And as soon as King Hezekiah heard it, he tore his clothes and covered himself with sackcloth and went into the temple of Jehovah. And he sent Eliakim, who was prefect of the palace, and Shebna the scribe and the eldest of the priests, covered with sackcloth, to Isaiah the prophet the son of Amoz. And they said to him, Thus saith Hezekiah, 'This is a day of trouble and of discipline and of contumely; for the children are come to birth and there is no strength to her who is in travail. It may be Jehovah thy God will hear all the words of the high official, whom his master the king of Assyria has sent to defy the living God, and will rebuke the words which Jehovah your God has heard; therefore lift up your prayer for the remnant that is left.'

11. Isaiah's assurances (6-7)

And when the servants of King Hezekiah came to Isaiah, Isaiah said to them, This answer shall you take to your masters: 'Thus saith Jehovah, "Be not afraid of the words that thou hast heard, with which the servants of the king of Assyria have blasphemed me. Behold I will put a spirit in him so that he shall hear tidings and shall return to his own land, and I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land."'

12. Assyria's condemnation and fate (21-28)

This is the word that Jehovah hath spoken concerning him:

'Thee she despises, at thee is laughing—the virgin, daughter of Zion!
Behind thee she is wagging her head—the daughter of Jerusalem!
Whom hast thou reviled and blasphemed? against whom raised thy voice?
Yea, and lifted up thine eyes on high? against Israel's Holy One!
By thy minions hast thou reviled the Lord; and hast said,
"With my many chariots,
I, even I, ascended the mountain heights, the ravines of Lebanon;
And I have cut down its tallest cedars, its choice cypresses.
And I press into its farthest halting-place, into its densest thickets.

I, even I, dig wells [in the desert], and drink strange waters,
And with the soles of my feet have I dried up all the rivers of Egypt."
Hast thou not heard, I prepared it long ago,
In the days of old I formed it; now I have brought it to pass;
Hence thy task is to turn fortified cities into ruined heaps,
And their inhabitants, helpless, are terrified and put to shame,
They are like the wild plants, the tender grass,
The blades of grass on the roofs blasted by the east wind.
Before me is thy rising up and thy lying down, thy going out and thy coming in,
I know thy raging against me and thine arrogance hath come to my ears,
Therefore I will put my ring through thy nose, and my bridle between thy lips,
And will make thee return by the way in which thou hast come.'

13. Sennacherib's departure (8. 9a)

So the high official returned and found the king of Assyria warring against Libnah, for he had heard that he had departed from Lachish. But that one had heard regarding Tirhakah king of Ethiopia, Behold, he has come out to fight against you. . . .

14. His overthrow (36. 37)

Then Sennacherib king of Assyria went away and returned and dwelt at Nineveh. And once while he was worshipping in the temple of Nisroch his god, his sons, Adrammelek and Sharezer, smote him with the sword; and they escaped into the land of Ararat. And Esarhaddon his son became king in his place.

15. Hezekiah's reign (20[20.21])

Now the other acts of Hezekiah, and all his brave deeds and how he made the pool, and the conduit, and brought water into the city, are they not recorded in the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah? And Hezekiah slept with his fathers; and Manasseh his son became king in his place.

I. **The Evidence that Sennacherib Invaded Judah about 690 B.C.** The account of Isaiah's effective counsel, recorded in II Kings 18 and 19 and in the parallel passages of Isaiah 36 and 37, is usually associated with the great crisis of 701 B.C. The grave difficulties in connecting it with that event have long been recognized. During the troublesome

years preceding 701 B.C., Isaiah, as well as Micah, had constantly declared that great and well-merited calamity was about to overtake the nation and city. It is almost inconceivable that a consistent prophet like Isaiah should suddenly reverse all his teachings and proclaim that Jerusalem would not fall before the Assyrians. As a matter of fact the biblical narrative implies and Assyrian records state very explicitly that in 701 B.C. Jerusalem did surrender unconditionally and that the city suffered the severest humiliation that Sennacherib could inflict without completely destroying it. The only satisfactory solution of these difficulties is either that we have here only a late, unhistorical tradition or else that the events recorded in these chapters, as well as in Isaiah 10^{5-34}, represent Isaiah's activity at a subsequent crisis in the history of Judah.

The biblical narrative is too exact and detailed to be regarded as simply the creation of later imagination. Recent discoveries have also confirmed Herodotus's testimony that Sennacherib made a second campaign into Palestine about 690 B.C. Herodotus calls Sennacherib "the king of the Arabians and the Assyrians." He also states that when the Assyrian army was on the borders of Egypt "there came in the night a multitude of field mice, which devoured all the quivers and the bowstrings of the enemy and ate the thongs by which they managed their shields. Next morning they commenced their flight, and great multitudes fell, as they had no arms with which to defend themselves. There stands to-day in the temple of Vulcan a stone statue of Sethos, with a mouse in his hand, and an inscription to this effect, 'Look on me and learn to reverence the gods.'"

Neither the contemporary biblical nor Assyrian records suggest any such overwhelming calamity in connection with the campaign of 701 B.C. Herodotus's account of Sennacherib's second campaign, however, accords well with the late biblical tradition, which states that an angel of the Lord smote the army of the Assyrians; for both traditions point to a great pestilence. In this second campaign, the ultimate goal of which was the conquest of Egypt, Sennacherib was naturally very loath to leave behind a strong fortress like Jerusalem, for, in case he met with reverses, it might rebel and prove a serious menace. His aim, therefore, in demanding its surrender was probably to dismantle its strong defences and to destroy it so completely that to rebel would be impossible,

II. **Isaiah's Counsel.** Two independent accounts of Isaiah's activity in connection with the closing crisis of his life have apparently been

closely combined in the narrative of Kings. While these differ slightly in detail, they substantiate each other, and confirm the conclusion that they rest on an historical basis. The more detailed account, which was probably taken from an independent history of Hezekiah's reign, has been followed in the text, and this has been supplemented by the poetic version of Isaiah's work found in the parallel narrative, which apparently comes from a later collection of Isaiah's stories. The situation is clear: while Sennacherib was besieging Lachish on the western frontier of Judah, preliminary to an advance against Egypt, he sent officers with an army to demand the unconditional surrender of Jerusalem. Their boastful words illustrate the spirit of the Assyrians which Isaiah at this time so strongly condemned. Hezekiah and his counsellors, as well as the common people, were naturally dismayed. Jehovah alone could deliver, and hence they turned in their extremity to his venerable prophet and statesman for counsel.

In the light of these conditions, Isaiah declared that Jehovah was no longer under obligation to chastise his people as in the years preceding 701 B.C.; but that he would now protect them from the great world power which threatened to destroy them. He recognized that, in demanding the unconditional surrender of a city which was paying its regular tribute and was not in a state of revolt, Sennacherib's position was indefensible, and that therefore the hour of Assyria's defeat was near at hand. In counselling the people of Judah to reject the demands of Sennacherib, Isaiah probably also knew that Sennacherib would not delay his advance against Egypt merely in order to subjugate a strong fortress, like Jerusalem, which was capable of maintaining a protracted siege.

III. **Isaiah's Confidence in Jehovah's Protection.** The address preserved in Isaiah 10 reveals the prophet's process of reasoning: Assyria has been in the past the staff with which Jehovah has chastised his guilty people, but now there is no longer need of judgment, and Assyria's arrogance and boasting have become intolerable. To make his assurance of divine deliverance doubly impressive, Isaiah vividly pictures the seemingly irresistible advance of the Assyrian host. He represents them as sweeping down from the north, over rugged hills and narrow passes, terrifying the inhabitants of the peasant villages, until the Assyrians are encamped on the Mount of Olives to the north of Jerusalem. Then he declares, at the very moment when they are about to fall upon Jerusalem, Jehovah shall smite them, and they shall fall with a crash, as a mighty cedar of Lebanon, prostrate and helpless before the blows of the woodman's axe.

That the prediction was uttered when Sennacherib was still at some distance from Jerusalem is indicated by the fact that the line of march was entirely different from that which he actually followed. As in all the history of the Assyrian invasions, the actual approach to Jerusalem was through the valleys which led up from the Philistine plain on the west. Isaiah and his hearers also knew that an approach directly from the north was entirely impracticable, and almost a physical impossibility. The concrete description, therefore, is but a part of that vivid imagery in which Isaiah clothed his message of promise and assurance, and reveals the depth and strength of the prophet's faith. It was a magnificent declaration of the eternal truth that Israel's Holy One would ever protect his trusting people from the strongest, most terrifying of human foes.

IV. **The Nature of the Deliverance.** The biblical narrative, supplemented by the tradition of Herodotus, suggests the nature of the ultimate deliverance. When Sennacherib's emissary returned, he found that the Assyrian king was already on the march to attack Tirhakah, the Ethiopian king. Near Pelusium, on the borders of Egypt, Sennacherib either met with defeat, or, as seems more probable in the light of later tradition, his army was overtaken by one of the pestilences which frequently rage along the low-lying southeastern shores of the Mediterranean. Hence he was obliged to beat a hasty retreat. The absence of a detailed account of this campaign in the Assyrian records is in itself evidence that it resulted disastrously. Although Egypt was not conquered until the reign of his successor Esarhaddon, Sennacherib nevertheless continued to maintain his rule over the states of Palestine; but Jerusalem, through the enlightened patriotism of Isaiah, remained intact through another century of important social and religious development.

V. **Isaiah's Work as Reformer, Statesman and Theologian.** Isaiah's loyalty to his race as well as to his God, in whose service he labored, compelled him to take up, especially in his earlier days, the thankless task of a social reformer. Fearlessly he attacked the crimes of oppression, judicial injustice, monopoly, sophistry, and social immorality, especially of those high in authority and public esteem, and faithfully pointed out the inevitable consequences of these deadly evils.

By modern students Isaiah is rightly recognized as the greatest statesman of Judah's history. While he was the most versatile of all the prophets, it was also on his work as a divinely gifted statesman that his exalted reputation with later generations chiefly rested. Through re-

peated crises he offered counsels which, if followed, would have brought peace and comparative prosperity to little Judah. He possessed in full measure the essential quality of being able to adapt his counsel to the changing conditions of his day. Thus, for example, in 735 B.C., he bitterly opposed any alliance with Assyria; but when once an alliance had been made, he was equally strenuous in maintaining that its terms be faithfully kept. The result was that between the years 712 and 701 B.C., his energies were devoted to persuading the politicians of Judah not to rebel. At the later crisis, however, of 690 B.C., when Sennacherib's demands were clearly unjust, he advised Hezekiah to refuse to comply with them and to bid defiance to the Assyrians.

Isaiah's statesmanship was of a practical, abiding quality, primarily because it was based on the principles of impartial justice, and rose above party spirit and strife. He was hampered by no racial prejudices, for he was inspired by a broad, deep faith in a righteous and omnipotent Ruler, not only of Judah, but of the universe. During most of his life Isaiah was directly opposed to the prevailing public opinion and to what was popularly interpreted as Judah's best interests; and yet no one in the light of events can doubt that he was the sanest, the truest patriot of his age. For the sake of his nation, he was ready not only to go barefoot, clad in his garb of a captive, through the cold Judean winters, but also to court inevitable unpopularity and bitter opposition in condemning the mistakes of Judah's leaders and the popular crimes which endangered the life of his nation. He stands, therefore, before all ages and races as an example of that noblest type of patriotism which hesitates not to face squarely unpalatable facts, to challenge injustice and corruption in high places, to labor unceasingly for the realization of God's will and thus in the end to save and upbuild a nation.

Isaiah was pre-eminently a prophet of action rather than a theologian. Unlike Hosea, he made no great original contributions which revolutionized Israel's faith; and yet in his initial vision and throughout all his life-work he placed his conception of Jehovah as the righteous and majestic king so prominently in the forefront that it became a new and transforming force in Israel's life and thought. While transcendent, the God of Isaiah's faith was personally interested and active in all human affairs. He was a God who demanded ceremonial cleanliness in the details of worship, but, above all, righteousness in the life and thoughts and deeds of individuals and classes. Isaiah's teachings took a deep hold upon his race because he proclaimed them by his own character and deeds, as well as by word of mouth. In throwing himself

actively and effectively into the varied life of his day, he demonstrated that to be loyal to Jehovah was to be a patriotic citizen of Judah, as well as of the larger Kingdom of God.

§ LXXX. THE REACTION UNDER MANASSEH AND THE DECLINE OF ASSYRIA

1. Heathen symbols and cults introduced by Manasseh (II K. 21 1-6)

Manasseh was twelve years old when he began to reign, and he reigned fifty-five years in Jerusalem; and his mother's name was Hephzibah. And he did that which displeased Jehovah, according to the abominable practices of the nations whom Jehovah cast out before the Israelites. For he built again the high places which Hezekiah his father had destroyed, and he erected altars for Baal and made an asherah, as Ahab king of Israel had done, and worshipped all the host of heaven and served them. And he built altars in the temple of Jehovah, of which Jehovah said, In Jerusalem will I put my name. And he built altars for all the host of heaven in the two courts of the temple of Jehovah. And he made his son to pass through the fire and practised augury and witchcraft and appointed mediums and wizards; he did much evil in the sight of Jehovah to provoke him to anger.

2. Desecration of the temple (7-9)

And he set the graven image of an asherah, that he had made, in the temple of which Jehovah said to David and to Solomon his son, In this house and in Jerusalem, which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel, will I put my name forever, and I will not cause the feet of Israel to wander any more out of the land which I gave their fathers, if only they will faithfully do as I have commanded them, and according to all the law that my servant Moses commanded them. But they did not hearken, and Manasseh seduced them to do more evil than did the nations which Jehovah destroyed before the Israelites.

3. Announcement of the coming captivity of Judah (10-16)

And Jehovah spoke by his servants the prophets, saying, Because Manasseh king of Judah hath done these abominations, and hath done more wickedly than all that the Amorites have done, who were before him, and hath made Judah also sin with his idols; therefore thus saith Jehovah the God of Israel, I am now about to bring such evil on Jerusalem and

Judah, that whoever heareth of it, both his ears shall tingle. And I will stretch over Jerusalem the measuring line, as over Samaria, and the plummet, as over the house of Ahab, and I will wipe Jerusalem as a man wipeth a dish, wiping and turning it upside down. And I will cast off the remnant of mine inheritance and deliver them into the hand of their enemies, that they may become a prey and a spoil to all their enemies, because they have done that which is displeasing to me, and have provoked me to anger, since the day their fathers came forth from Egypt, even to the present.

4. Manasseh's massacres (16)

Moreover Manasseh shed much innocent blood until he had filled Jerusalem from one end to the other, besides his sin with which he made Judah sin, in doing that which displeased Jehovah.

5. His other acts and death (17. 18)

Now the other acts of Manasseh and all that he did, and his sin that he committed, are they not recorded in the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah? And Manasseh slept with his fathers and was buried in the garden of his own palace, in the garden of Uzza; and Amon his son became king in his place.

6. Amon's evil policy (19-22)

Amon was twenty-two years old when he began to reign, and he reigned two years in Jerusalem; and his mother's name was Meshullemeth the daughter of Haruz of Jotbah. And he did that which displeased Jehovah, as did Manasseh his father. And he walked in all the way in which his father had walked and served the idols that his father served, and worshipped them, and he forsook Jehovah, the God of his fathers, and walked not in the way of Jehovah.

7. His assassination (23-26)

And the servants of Amon conspired against him and put the king to death in his palace. But the people of the land slew all who had conspired against Amon; and the people of the land made Josiah his son king in his place. Now the other acts of Amon which he did, are they not recorded in the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah? And he was buried in his sepulchre in the garden of Uzza; and Josiah his son became king in his place.

THE VISION OF NAHUM THE ELKOSHITE

Came he not forth from thee
Who planned evil against Jehovah,
Who counselled villany?
Thus hath Jehovah given command concerning thee:
Thy name shall no longer be remembered;
From the house of thy God will I cut off idol and molten image,
I will make thy grave a stench.

8. Jehovah's condemnation of Assyria (Na. 1 11. 14)

He that breaketh in pieces has come up against thee.
Keep careful watch!
Guard the way!
Gird up the loins!
Gather all thy strength!

9. The battle-alarm (2 1)

The shield of his heroes is colored red;
The warriors are clad in scarlet;
The steel of the chariots gleams like fire;
In the day of preparation the horses are prancing.
On the streets the chariots rattle;
They go galloping across the squares.

10. The approaching foe (3-4b)

Their appearance is like torches,
Like lightning they dart to and fro.
He musters his nobles,
They succeed in their onset,
They rush to the wall,
They set up the covering.

11. The attack (4c-5)

The water-gates are opened,
And the palace goes down in ruins.
The queen is uncovered, she is carried off,
And her maids moan like doves,
They are beating upon their breasts.
But Nineveh is like a pool of water,
Her waters are flowing away.
Stand, stand [one cries], but not one turns back.

12. The downfall of Nineveh (6-8)

13. Plunder of the city (9. 10)

Loot the silver, loot the gold;
For there is no end to the store,
The wealth of all precious things.
She is empty and desolate and waste!
The heart faints, the knees smite together,
Anguish is in all loins,
And the faces of all are flushed.

14. Nineveh the den of the Assyrian lion (11. 12)

Where is the den of the lions,
The lair of the young lions,
Where the lion was wont to withdraw,
The whelps also with none to startle them?
The lion tore in pieces enough for his whelps,
And strangled for his mates,
He filled his caves with prey,
And his lairs with plunder.

15. To be destroyed by Jehovah (13)

Behold, I am against thee, is the oracle of Jehovah of hosts.
And I will burn thy dwelling in smoke,
The sword shall devour thy young lions,
Yea, I will cut off thy prey from the earth,
The voice of thy messengers shall be heard no more.

16. Because of its many crimes (3 1-4)

Woe to the bloody city,
Full of lies and plunder;
There is no limit to the spoil!
The noise of the whip and of rattling wheels!
The prancing horses and bounding chariots,
The horseman, charging with flashing sword and glittering spear!
Many are the slain and the dead are in heaps,
And there are corpses without number;
They stumble over the bodies!
It is because of the many crimes of the harlot,
The alluring mistress of magic,
She who hath sold nations through her harlotries,
And peoples through her black art.

Behold, I am against thee, is the oracle of Jehovah of hosts;
Yea, I will uncover thy skirts before thy face,
For I will show the nations thy nakedness,
And the kingdoms thy disgrace.
And I will cast loathsome filth upon thee,
And make thee vile, and set thee up as a gazing stock.
And all who look upon thee shall flee from thee,
And say, 'Nineveh is wasted; who will bewail her?
Whence shall I seek comfort for thee?'

17. Disgraced in the eyes of all the nations (6-7)

Are you better than No-ammon [Thebes],
Which lay in the midst of the streams,
With waters around about her,
Whose bulwark was the sea,
Whose wall was the waters?
Her strength was Ethiopia and Egypt,
And Put, with countless people,
The Libyans also were her support.

18. Far from invincible (8. 9)

But she also was carried away, she went into captivity;
Her little ones also were dashed to pieces at the head of every street;
They cast lots for her honored men, while all her great ones were bound in fetters.
So too, thou shalt become drunken, thou shalt be overcome,
Thou also shalt seek a refuge from before thine enemy.
All thy fortresses shall be like fig trees, thy people like the first-ripe fruit;
If they are shaken they drop into the mouth of the eater.
See, thy people are women; fire has consumed thy defences;
The gates of thy land are wide open to thine enemies.

19. Ripe for conquest (10-13)

Draw thy water for the siege, strengthen thy fortresses;
Go to the clay pits and tread the clay; take up the brick moulds.
There the fire will consume thee, the sword will cut thee down;
It will devour thee, though thou increase thyself like the devouring worm or a swarm of locusts.

20. The futility of resistance (14-17)

Make thy merchants more than the stars of heaven,
Thy watchmen as the locusts and thy scribes as the grasshoppers,
Which swarm in the hedges on a cold day,
But when the sun shines they fly away and their place is unknown.

21. Fatal weakness at last revealed (18-19).

Woe to thee! Thy shepherds slumber; thy nobles are sleeping;
Thy people are scattered on the mountains, and there is no one to assemble them,
There is no healing for thy hurt; thy wound is fatal.
All who hear the news about thee clap their hands over thee,
For upon whom hath thy wickedness not fallen continually?

I. Causes of the Religious Reaction under Manasseh. The record of Isaiah's work closes with the account of his great triumph in delivering Jerusalem. A very late tradition states that he died the death of a martyr. Whether this statement is historical or not, it is certain that with the accession of Manasseh, about 686 B.C., a heathen reaction swept over Judah which for a time appears to have undone almost all that the great prophets had accomplished.

The causes of this reaction are not stated, but must be inferred from the historical situation. Tradition assigns to Manasseh a reign of fifty-five years. In any case he must have been exceedingly young when he came to the throne and therefore still under the influence of the women of the harem. Against this potent class in the court the great Isaiah had uttered his bitterest denunciations, and it is probable that through the young Manasseh their resentment at last found practical expression. Throughout this period the women especially figure as the devotees of the old Canaanite superstitions which still flourished in Judah. They also resorted to the sorcerers, magicians and necromancers. Throughout the kingdom the mass of the people clung to the older cults and objects of worship which Hezekiah, under the influence of Isaiah, had either sought to destroy or else had placed under the ban.

By the conservatives of the realm, the king's ruthless destruction of the brazen serpent, associated by tradition with Moses, was doubtless felt to be an act of impious sacrilege. Isaiah and Micah, in discountenancing the ceremonial forms of worship observed in connection with the temple at Jerusalem and other shrines throughout the land, were

undoubtedly regarded by the majority of the people as heretics and iconoclasts. Their austere demands of justice and mercy were repulsive to the corrupt leaders of the nation. Their new and exalted conceptions of Jehovah were beyond the comprehension of the majority of the people.

During the long period of peace, which followed under the rule of Assyria, Assyrian fashions, traditions and religious ideals permeated Judah and were no longer regarded with the hatred and suspicion of the earlier days. These various powerful influences conspired to bring about a great reaction which, under the patronage of the king and court, threatened to obliterate all that the great prophets of the Assyrian period had accomplished.

II. **The Real Nature of the Reaction.** In the light of the narrative in Kings, the reform sermons of Zephaniah and Jeremiah and the account of Josiah's reformation, it is possible to gain a very definite idea of the real nature of this reaction. It was rooted in that large substratum of old Semitic heathenism which lay, even at this enlightened period, only a short distance below the surface of Israel's national religion. Most of the ceremonial institutions in use in the worship of Jehovah were of Canaanite origin. These and the traditions which were still cherished at the ancient high places, reconsecrated to Jehovah, fostered the primitive superstitions. It was exceedingly easy, therefore, for the people to revert to the worship of the local baals. Human sacrifice was also such a firmly fixed Semitic institution that the preaching of the prophets and the growing enlightenment of the nation had not sufficed to stamp it out completely.

The narrative of Kings and the sermons of the contemporary prophets refer repeatedly to the worship of the sun and moon and heavenly bodies. These are clearly the Babylonian deities worshipped by the Assyrians: Shamash, the sun god; Sin, the moon god, and the other Semitic deities associated in the Babylonian theophany with the different planets. It is not probable that Manasseh, in setting up in the temple of Jehovah itself an asherah, or sacred pole, and horses dedicated to the sun, intended to overthrow the worship of Jehovah as the chief god of his nation. Rather he was simply recognizing the old popular forms of worship and paying, as he thought, proper homage to the deities of his conquerors. In the popular mind such a blending of cults did not seem inconsistent.

Manasseh's long and peaceful reign lent support to the popular belief that he was a true conserver of the faith. His son Amon, who reigned but two years, followed the religious policy of his father. His death

was apparently due to a court conspiracy, but his son Josiah was quickly placed on the throne by the people, and the conspirators were slain.

III. **The Prophetic Party.** The tradition in Kings, confirmed by the statement of Jeremiah (2^{30}), that many of the prophets of Jehovah were put to death by Manasseh, is probably historical. No true prophet could witness such a religious reaction as that instituted by Manasseh and remain silent. But to protest was to attack the policy of the king, and in those days, when the contest between Jehovahism and heathenism was so intense, such an attack would be regarded as treason. At this time also the people, the natural supporters of their champions the prophets, favored Manasseh's policy, so that the prophets stood alone. Though silenced in public, the men who had accepted the lofty prophetic interpretation of religion were not faithless to the trust which Isaiah had placed in them. The testimony bound up with his disciples was preserved and later became a potent force in Judah's history. Probably during this reactionary reign the important sermons of Amos, Hosea, Isaiah and Micah were collected and edited.

It would appear that at this time the early prophetic histories of Northern and Southern Israel were combined in one continuous narrative, supplemented by later traditions, such as the story of the flood, which had been derived from the Babylonians and later naturalized in Judah. Possibly at this time also the foundations were laid for that revision and expansion of the older laws which embodied the new and nobler principles of the prophets, and which aimed to correct the evils first glaringly apparent during the reactionary reign of Manasseh. The remarkable outburst of prophetic activity during the reign of Josiah at least indicates that during the preceding period the disciples of Isaiah were lacking neither in faith nor activity.

IV. **Events in the Assyrian Empire.** It was during the reign of Manasseh that the Assyrian empire enjoyed its brilliant Indian summer. In 680 B.C. Esarhaddon, one of the ablest and most energetic Assyrian rulers, came to the throne. He not only succeeded in preserving the integrity of the great empire but also realized the ambition of his father Sennacherib in conquering Egypt. He was a devoted patron and student of the old Babylonian literature and doubtless inspired in his son, who succeeded him in 668 B.C., those instincts which made Ashurbanipal's reign the golden era in the literary life of the Assyrian people. In the great library which he reared at Nineveh, this remarkable ruler placed copies of all that was best in the ancient Babylonian writings, and from this library have come the great majority of the historical and religious

inscriptions which to-day reveal the history and life of the ancient East. During his reign of forty-two years (until 626 B.C.) Assyria maintained its control over southwestern Asia and Egypt.

For a quarter of a century the Ethiopian king, Tirhakah, persistently, but fruitlessly, contested the Assyrian rule in Egypt. At last, about 660 B.C., Thebes, the ancient northern capital, was completely destroyed, and Ashurbanipal ruled almost without opposition from the Taurus Mountains in the north to the upper Nile in the south. Manasseh is mentioned but twice in the Assyrian inscriptions: once as one of the kings of the Hittite country who provided timber for the great armory which Esarhaddon built at Nineveh, and later as furnishing contingents to the Assyrians in their campaigns against Egypt. Of the rebellion and subsequent repentance of Manasseh recounted by the author of Chronicles, there is no evidence either in the older biblical sources or in the Assyrian annals. Rather, Judah and the other states of Palestine prospered during this period because they had learned to submit unresistingly to Assyria's rule.

V. **The Decline of Assyria.** With the death of Ashurbanipal, in 626 B.C., began the rapid decline of Assyria. The inherent weakness of the great empire was apparent even during the reign of Ashurbanipal, who maintained its prestige chiefly by his own personal energy and ability. The middle class, the real Assyrian people, had long since ceased to exercise any important influence. The authority of the king was in the hands of a large official class and was maintained by a vast army made up of hired mercenaries. National patriotism had vanished and the empire was ruled in the interests of a small favored class. The result was that when Assyria fell under the control of the incompetent successors of Ashurbanipal, its weakness suddenly became apparent to the outside world. At the same time great hordes of invaders from the north attacked the empire in the west and east, so that Assyria soon lost its western provinces. About 606 B.C., before the united attack of these northern forces and the Chaldeans, Nineveh, the proud mistress of southwestern Asia, fell, never again to rise.

VI. **The Date and Theme of Nahum's Prophecy.** The stirring prophecy of Nahum furnishes a fitting conclusion to the Assyrian period of Judah's history. The date of the prophecy is somewhere between the final fall of Thebes, about 660 B.C., which is referred to in [18], and the final destruction of Nineveh in 607–6 B.C. The references to Nineveh in the prophecy favor the conclusion that its fall was not far distant, although not yet an accomplished fact. The death of Ashurbanipal and

the attacks of the northern hordes, about the year 626 B.C., during which Assyria still loomed large on Judah's horizon, furnish, on the whole, the most probable date for this dramatic poem.

Of Nahum himself nothing is known. Probably his native town Elkosh was one of the small and otherwise unknown villages of Judah; for his point of view is Judean, although he makes no direct reference in the prophecy to his native land. The prophecy is really a song of triumph over the approaching fall of Judah's ancient foe, Nineveh. In powerful imagery he pictures the guilt of the capital, the bloody spoils stored in its midst, and the justice of the divine judgment which is now about to overtake it. He also portrays vividly the advance of the invincible foes, the consternation of the defenders, and the indifference and incapacity of those to whom the king of Nineveh turns for help. In conclusion he voices the taunt song which will rise from the lips of the many peoples who have been ground down under the iron heel of Assyria, when at last shall come the glad news: "Nineveh the mighty has fallen."

VII. **The Object of Nahum's Prophecy.** The little prophecy of Nahum has been supplemented by a later editor who has added, as an introduction, an alphabetical psalm describing Jehovah's justice in punishing his enemies. The editor has also further supplemented this by words of consolation and promise, especially adapted to the point of view and needs of the post-exilic community in which he lived; but the original prophecy evidently said nothing regarding the fortunes of pre-exilic Judah. It is clear, however, that Nahum had in mind the needs of his fellow-countrymen. His object was threefold: (1) to illustrate by the course of human history Jehovah's just rule in the universe, (2) to point out the inevitable fate destined sooner or later to overtake every nation which forsook the universal laws of justice and mercy, and (3) to bring a message of consolation and encouragement to the people of Judah, who for more than a century had suffered bitter wrongs at the hands of the Assyrians.

VIII. **The Great Teachings of the Prophets of the Assyrian Period.** In the perspective of history it is clear that Assyria, under divine direction, performed a great service for the people of Judah, as well as of Northern Israel, by opening the eyes of their spiritual guides to certain fundamental religious truths. In the light of their vision of Jehovah as the just, majestic, holy and loving Ruler of the universe, the uncertainty, the anxiety and the stress and struggle which had characterized the heathen cults and Israel's early religion disappeared, and

instead, prophets like Isaiah proclaimed, and exemplified in their lives, a faith which brought to the believer strength, security and peace. Religion was defined not as something apart from life, but as the central factor in the life of society and of the individual. Man's whole duty was shown to be, both in public and in private, "to act justly, to love mercy and to walk humbly before his God." Thus, at last, religion and ethics were completely blended. The task of the next generation was to impress these fundamental principles upon the popular conscience, to incorporate them in the legal codes, and to render them effective in the life of the individual and state.

THE LAST HALF CENTURY OF JUDAH'S HISTORY

§ LXXXI. ZEPHANIAH'S REFORM SERMONS

1. Josiah's benign policy (II K. 22 1. 2)

Josiah was eight years old when he began to reign, and he reigned thirty-one years in Jerusalem; and his mother's name was Jedidah the daughter of Adaiah of Bozkath. And he did that which pleased Jehovah and walked in all the way of David his father and turned not aside to the right or to the left.

THE WORD OF JEHOVAH WHICH CAME TO ZEPHANIAH

2. Introduction (Zeph. 1 7)

Bow before the Lord Jehovah, for near is the day of Jehovah,
For Jehovah hath prepared a sacrifice, he hath sanctified his guests.

3. Jehovah's judgment upon all the earth (2. 3)

I will completely take away everything from off the face of the earth, is the oracle of Jehovah.
I will take away man and beast, the birds of the heavens and the fish of the sea,
I will cause the wicked to stumble, and I will cut off mankind from the face of the earth,

4. Upon the apostates in Judah (4-5)

And I will stretch out my hand over Judah and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem,
And I will cut from this place the surviving Baalism and the name of the heathen priestlings,
And those who worship on the housetops the host of heaven,
And those worshippers of Jehovah who also pay homage to Milcom,
And those who turn back from following Jehovah,
And those who do not seek Jehovah nor strive to find him.

And I will punish the officers and the royal princes,
And all those who clothe themselves in foreign apparel,
And I will punish all who leap over the threshold,
Who fill the house of their lord with violence and deceit.

5. Upon the faithless rulers (8. 9)

Hark! a cry from the Fish Gate, and a wailing from the New Quarter,
And a great din from the hills and a wailing from the inhabitants of the Makhtesh,
For all the merchants are destroyed, all those laden with money are cut off.
And I will search Jerusalem with a lamp, and I will punish those who are at ease,
Who are thickened upon their lees, who are saying to themselves,
Jehovah brings neither prosperity nor calamity.
Their wealth shall become a prey and their houses a desolation.

6. Upon the rich, self-satisfied merchants (10-13)

Near is the day of Jehovah! near and rapidly approaching!
Near is the bitter day of Jehovah, and strong men will then cry out;
That day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress,
A day of destruction and desolation, a day of darkness and gloom,
A day of clouds and thick darkness, a day of the trumpet and battle-cry,
Against the fortified cities and against the high battlements.
And I will bring distress upon men, and they shall walk as the blind,
And their blood shall be poured out as dust, and their flesh as dung.
Neither their silver nor their gold will be able to deliver them,
For in the day of the wrath of Jehovah and in the fire of his jealousy the whole earth shall be devoured,
For he will make an end, yea, a speedy end of all the inhabitants of the earth.

7. Nature of Jehovah's day of judgment (14-18)

8. Humble faith in Jehovah alone will deliver (2 1-3)

Be ashamed within yourselves, yea, be ashamed,
Before ye become as the drifting chaff,
Before the day of Jehovah comes upon you,
Before the day of Jehovah's wrath comes upon you.
Seek Jehovah all ye meek of the earth, ye who carry out his teaching,
Seek righteousness, seek meekness; perhaps ye may be hidden in the day of Jehovah's wrath.

9. The judgment to fall on the Philistines and Ethiopians (4-7. 12)

For Gaza shall be forsaken; Ashkelon a desolation!
Ashdod—by noon shall they rout her and Ekron be torn up!
Woe to the dwellers by the seashore; people of the Cherethites!
The word of Jehovah is against thee, O Canaan, land of the Philistines!
I will destroy thee so that thou shalt be without inhabitant,
And thou shalt become shepherd's cots and folds for flocks.
In the house of Ashkelon will they lie down at evening, by the sea will they feed.
Ye, also, O Ethiopians, slain by his sword are ye!

10. Proud Nineveh's fate (13-15)

And I will stretch out my hand against the north and destroy Assyria;
And I will make Nineveh a desolation, dry as the wilderness,
And herds will lie down in her midst; every beast of the earth,
Both pelican and porcupine shall lodge in her capitals,
The owl shall hoot in the window; the raven on the doorstep, for the city is destroyed.
This is the exultant city which sat secure,
She who said to herself, I am and there is none else!
How hath she become a desolation! A lair of beasts!
Every passerby hisses at her, shakes his hand.

11. Guilt of Jerusalem (3 1. 2)

Woe to the rebellious and unclean city of oppression,
She hath not obeyed the voice, she hath not accepted instruction,
In Jehovah she hath not trusted, to her God she hath not drawn near.

Her rulers in her midst are roaring lions,
Her judges are evening wolves, who leave nothing over until the morning,
Her prophets are braggarts, faithless men,
Her priests profane what is holy and do violence to the law.

12. Of her rulers and teachers (3. 4)

Jehovah is righteous in her midst, he doeth no wrong,
Morning by morning he established his decree,
Light is not lacking, an oversight is unknown.
I have cut off nations, their turrets are destroyed;
I have laid waste their broad streets, so that none passes over them.
Desolate are their cities without a man, without inhabitant.

13. Jehovah's faithful instruction by precept and example (5. 6)

I said, 'Surely she will fear me, she will accept instruction,
Nothing shall vanish from her eyes that I have impressed upon her;'
But the more zealously have they made all their deeds corrupt.

14. Jerusalem's failure to learn (7)

I. The Accession of the Young Josiah. The accession of the young king Josiah, in 639 B.C., marks an important transition in the history of Judah. The beginning of his reign witnessed the passing of the authority of Assyria, and its close the appearance of the new world power, the Chaldeans, on the horizon of southwestern Asia. His reign was during the calm between the two great waves of foreign invasion. In the inner life of Judah it was also a period of supreme importance, for it witnessed the temporary overthrow of the old heathenism and the renaissance of the teachings of the great prophets of the Assyrian period. Under his benign rule there suddenly arose a remarkable group of priests and prophets who left their stamp upon Israel's religion and prepared the nation for the painful and trying experiences of the Babylonian exile. The period thus brilliantly inaugurated was destined, however, to end in gloom and national annihilation. In little over half a century after Josiah's accession Jerusalem and the temple lay in ruins, and the overwhelming fate which earlier prophets had feared was realized.

King Josiah himself was a remarkable figure in Judah's history. He stands out as one of the few successors of David who ruled in behalf of the people and in accord with the counsels of the most progressive re-

ligious advisers of his realm. His record is also the more remarkable because he was the son of Amon and the grandson of the reactionary king Manasseh.

The biblical records are silent as to why he reversed the policy of his immediate ancestors and championed thus zealously the great principles laid down by the prophets of the Assyrian period. It is true that there were forces at work in Judah which were making for reform. The great Assyrian power, whose might and conquest had dazzled the followers of Manasseh, was beginning to lose its ancient prestige. The inevitable result was a loss of confidence in the Babylonian gods, which the conquerors worshipped. Having caught a glimpse of the higher faith and ethical standards of the prophets, it was also impossible for the people of Judah to find complete and permanent satisfaction in the old heathen cults. The gross immorality and superstition, which characterized the ancient Canaanite institutions, inevitably produced in time a strong counter reaction.

Josiah, however, was the moving spirit in the reformation; and in his youthful training is probably to be found the explanation of his remarkable character and work. To have taken the stand which he did, he must have fallen under the influence of certain disciples of the earlier prophets. The probabilities strongly support the conclusion that his youthful teacher was the prophet Zephaniah, whose sermons roused the nation, as well as the young king. The stern, uncompromising spirit, which characterizes the prophet's reform sermons, is reflected in the extreme measures adopted later by Josiah.

II. **Zephaniah's Ancestry.** Almost nothing is known of Zephaniah's private history. It is significant, however, that his ancestry is traced back for four generations to Hezekiah. The only satisfactory explanation of this fact is that his great great-grandfather was none other than the king by that name who figured as a religious reformer in the days of Isaiah, three-quarters of a century before. If this most natural inference be true, Zephaniah was a member of the royal family, and in his veins, as well as in those of Josiah, ran the blood of the earlier reformer king. In courage and zeal he was a disciple of Isaiah. Many of his teachings also were but a reiteration, in the light of the changed conditions, of the messages of that great prophet of Hezekiah's reign.

III. **The Historical Background of Zephaniah's Work.** The occasion which called forth Zephaniah's sermons was apparently the advance of the dread foes from the north to which the young Jeremiah

frequently refers in his earliest addresses. They were the Scythians, who, as may be inferred from Herodotus (I, 105) and from the later references in Ezekiel, had swept down from eastern Europe through the passes of the Caucasus, and finally occupied Armenia and parts of Asia Minor. With their families and possessions, they moved on in great hordes, regardless of racial and political barriers, fearless in battle, pitiless in their treatment of conquered peoples, bent only on conquest and plunder. About 626 or 625 B.C., one such detachment passed down the great highway which ran along the eastern shore of the Mediterranean to the borders of Egypt. Their apparent object was to protect the interests of their allies, the Assyrians, and to drive the Egyptians from Philistia, but their sudden appearance and their barbarous methods of warfare filled the peoples of Syria and Palestine with terror. Although Judah was not on their direct line of advance, and apparently was never actually invaded by them, it had good reason to fear. A half century of apathy and religious indifference was thus suddenly brought to an end. The prophetic reformers would not be slow to improve this opportunity. The most probable date, therefore, for Zephaniah's stirring reform sermons is the year 626–5 B.C., when the Scythians first appeared on Judah's horizon.

IV. **The Prophecies of Zephaniah.** The book of Zephaniah falls naturally into four general divisions. The first chapter describes in powerful imagery Jehovah's dread day of judgment upon Judah. It is best known to-day through its Latin translation which is the basis of the quaint, impressive, mediæval hymn, *Dies Iræ*. The second chapter traces the effect of this judgment upon Judah's powerful neighbors. The third division, 3^{1-7}, describes in impassioned language the heinous crimes of the different classes in Jerusalem. The remainder of the book (3^{8-20}) contains promises of national restoration and reflects the point of view of the exile. This last section was clearly added by a later hand to correct the grim predictions of doom and condemnation with which Zephaniah sought to arouse the consciences of his guilty fellow-countrymen. Zephaniah, like Amos and Micah, was pre-eminently a prophet of reform; and his sermons are important, not so much because of their originality, as because of their intense moral earnestness and their immediate effect in preparing the way for Josiah's reformation.

V. **The Coming Day of Jehovah.** The prophet's opening words reflect conditions resulting from Manasseh's reactionary, heathen policy. In Judah itself the old Canaanite Baalism still had its devotees and its priests, as in Northern Israel in the days of Jezebel.

Many Jerusalemites were also devoted to the worship on the housetops of the popular Babylonian gods. Others were inclined toward the worship of the Ammonite god Milcom. Notwithstanding these heathen tendencies, the majority of the people doubtless still nominally worshipped Jehovah; but in court and market-place few were obedient to Jehovah's demands as formulated by his faithful prophets. Zephaniah employed strenuous methods to arouse the popular conscience. Recalling Judah's past experiences, he pictured the pitiless sacking of Jerusalem by the dread foe and its effect upon the different classes in the city. He declared that the day of Jehovah, which his hearers, like those of Amos, expected would be a day of joy and national vindication, would prove a day of anguish and lamentation.

VI. **Zephaniah's Ultimate Aim.** A higher conception of Jehovah and a nobler ideal of social and ethical righteousness had been clearly presented to the people of Judah by the prophets of the Assyrian period; but the nation had deliberately rejected this nobler ideal. Hence such strenuous denunciations as at this time fell from the lips of Zephaniah and his young colleague Jeremiah were apparently the only forces that would touch the national conscience and prepare the way for a thorough reform.

In the second division of his prophecy Zephaniah seeks still further to arouse the people and at the same time to illustrate Jehovah's impartial justice and his abhorrence of all forms of pride and injustice and apostasy, by declaring that upon Israel's powerful neighbors would likewise fall the same overwhelming judgment. His prophecies picture a just God, rising majestic above the smouldering ruins of mighty nations. No one can read to-day his impassioned words and follow his vivid imagery without appreciating the powerful effect which they must have made upon a people trembling in mortal fear of invasion by barbarian hordes; but to understand his message rightly it is necessary to remember that his ultimate purpose was to warn his people, that through contrition and reform they might escape the very calamities which he so graphically pictured. Like all the true prophets, therefore, Zephaniah's real aim was constructive. Back of all his grim predictions was the warm heart of the patriot and lover of God and men, earnestly laboring to establish the complete and perfect rule of God upon earth.

§ LXXXII. JEREMIAH'S CALL AND EARLY REFORM SERMONS

Now this word of Jehovah came to me, saying: 1. The divine call to service (Jer. 1 4. 5)

Before I formed thee in thy mother's bosom, I knew thee,
And before thou camest forth from the womb, I consecrated thee.

But I said: 2. Jeremiah's hesitation (6)

Alas, O Lord Jehovah!
Behold, I do not know how to speak;
For I am only a youth.

Then Jehovah said to me: 3. The divine assurance (7. 8)

Do not say, 'I am only a youth';
For to all to whom I shall send thee, thou shalt go,
And whatever I command thee, thou shalt speak.
Be not afraid of them,
For I am with thee to deliver thee.

Thereupon Jehovah stretched out his hand and touched my mouth, and Jehovah said to me: 4. The divine commission (9. 10)

Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth,
See, I have set thee this day over the nations and kingdoms,
To tear up, to break down and to destroy, to build and to plant.

The word of Jehovah also came to me, saying, What do you see? And I answered, A branch of an almond tree [Heb. *shāḳēd*]. Then Jehovah said to me, Thou hast seen well; for I am ever watching [Heb. *shōḳēd*], over my words to perform them. 5. A symbol of divine protection (11. 12)

6. Of the foes advancing from the north (13-16)

Again the word of Jehovah came to me: What dost thou see? And I answered, A caldron brewing hot and it faces from the north. Then Jehovah said to me,

From the north disaster is brewing for all the inhabitants of the land.
For behold, I will summon all the kingdoms from the north,
And they shall come and set up each his throne before the gates of Jerusalem,
And around about all its walls and against the cities of Judah.
And I will pass judgment upon them because of all their wickedness,
In that they have forsaken me and offered sacrifices to other gods,
And have worshipped the works of their own hands.

7. Encouragement to be brave in the face of bitter opposition (17-19)

Therefore do thou gird up thy loins and arise,
Speak to them all that I command thee,
Do not be terrified before them, lest I terrify thee in their presence,
For behold, I myself make thee this day a fortified city,
And a brazen wall against the kings of Judah, its princes, and the common people.
And they shall fight against thee, but they will not overcome thee,
For I am with thee to deliver thee, saith Jehovah.

8. Innocency of Judah's earlier days (2 2. 3)

Thus saith Jehovah [to Judah]:

I remember the devotion of thy youth, the love of thy bridal time;
How thou wentest after me in the wilderness, in the land that was not sown.
Israel was Jehovah's holy possession, the first fruit of his increase,
All who devoured him had to pay the penalty, calamity always overtook them.

For from of old thou hast broken thy yoke, thou hast burst thy bonds,
And thou hast said, 'I will not serve thee, but I will go upon every height,'
Yea, under every green tree thou hast stretched thyself as a harlot. 9. Destroyed by idolatry (20)

Yet I planted thee as a noble vine, altogether from good seed;
But alas, how thou hast turned into the degenerate shoots of a wild vine!
For though thou wash thyself with lye and use much soap,
Thy guilt hath left its stain before me, is the oracle of Jehovah. 10. Fatal effects of guilt (21. 22)

As a thief is ashamed when he is caught, so shall the house of Israel be ashamed—
They, their kings, their nobles, their priests and their prophets—
Who say to a tree, 'Thou art my father,' and to a stone, 'Thou hast borne me,'
For they have turned to me their back, but not their faces,
Yet in the time of their trouble they say, 'Arise and save us.' 11. Its remorse without true contrition (26. 27)

Why do ye contend against me? Ye are all godless!
Yea, ye have all transgressed against me, is the oracle of Jehovah.
In vain I smote your children, they received no correction,
A sword destroyed your prophets, like a destroying lion,
Yet ye have not feared nor heeded the word of Jehovah.
Have I been a wilderness to Israel or a land of darkness?
Why do my people say, 'We will be our own master, we will come no more to thee'? 12. Failure to listen to Jehovah's teaching (29-31)

Can a maiden forget her ornaments, or a bride her girdle?
Yet my people have forgotten me, days without number.
How well thou hast directed thy way to seek love!
Therefore thou hast inclined thy ways to evil. 13. Incredible infidelity (32. 33)

14. Shamelessly guilty (34. 35)

Also on thy skirts is found the blood of innocent persons,
I have found it not in a secret place but over all.
Yet thou sayest, 'I am innocent; surely his anger is turned away from me.'
Behold, I will condemn thee, because thou sayest, 'I have not sinned.'

15. Offer of pardon if the nation will but repent (3 12b. 13)

Return, O apostate Israel, to me, is the oracle of Jehovah.
I will not continue to look in anger upon you, for I am merciful,
And I will not retain my anger forever; only acknowledge thy guilt,
For against Jehovah thy God hast thou transgressed;
And thou hast strayed hither and thither in quest of strangers under every green tree;
But thou hast not heeded my voice, is the oracle of Jehovah.

16. Frustration of Jehovah's purpose (19. 20)

But I had thought, 'How I will make thee like sons,
And will give thee a pleasant land, a noble inheritance!'
I also had thought, 'You will call me father, and will not turn away from me.'
But verily as a woman is faithless to her paramour, so ye have been faithless to me, O house of Israel.

17. The foe from the north (4 5. 6)

Declare ye in Judah and announce in Jerusalem, and say:
'Blow ye the trumpet in the land, cry aloud,
And say, "Assemble and let us go into the fortified cities."
Lift up a signal toward Zion, flee, stay not!
For calamity is coming from the north and a great destruction!'

18. Like a fierce lion (7. 8)

A lion has gone up from his thicket, yea, a destroyer of nations,
He has departed, he has gone forth from his lair to lay waste the earth.
For this, gird yourselves with sackcloth, lament and wail,
For the fierce anger of Jehovah is not turned away from us.

A hot wind from the bare heights in the wilderness comes toward my people,
Not to winnow and not to cleanse—a strong, powerful wind.
See, like thunder-clouds, it mounts up and like the whirlwind its chariots,
Its horses are swifter than eagles; woe to us! for we are ruined!
For hark! someone is bringing news from Dan and announcing evil from Mount Ephraim.

19. Like a fierce whirlwind (11b-13,15)

Make it known among the nations: 'There they are!' Announce in Jerusalem,
'Robber bands are coming from a far distant land,'
Yea, they are raising their cry against the cities of Judah,
Lying in wait in the field, they are against her on every side,
Because she hath rebelled against me, is the oracle of Jehovah.

20. Their approach (16. 17)

Thy conduct and thy acts have procured these things for thee!
This is the cause of thy calamity, verily it is bitter, for it toucheth thy heart.
Cleanse thy heart, O Jerusalem, from wickedness, that thou mayest be delivered.
How long shall thine evil thoughts stay within thee?

21. All because of Jerusalem's guilt (18. 14)

My anguish, my anguish! I am pained to the depths of my heart.
My heart is in a tumult within me, I cannot keep silent,
For I have heard the sound of the trumpet, the alarm of war!
Destruction succeeds destruction, for the whole land is laid waste,
Suddenly are my tents destroyed, in an instant my curtains.
How long must I see the signal, hear the sound of the trumpet!
For my people are senseless, they know me not,
They are foolish children, and they have no understanding;
They are skilled in doing evil, but they know not how to do right!

22. The prophet's anguish (19-22)

23. Corruption everywhere (5 1-3b)

Run to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem and see now and know,
And seek in its open spaces, if ye can find a man,
If there is any who does right and seeks after the truth!
And though they say, As Jehovah liveth, surely they swear to a falsehood.
O Jehovah, do not thine eyes look upon truth?
Thou smitest them, but they are not pained, they refuse to receive correction.

24. High and low alike (4. 5)

Then I thought, Surely these are the common people, without understanding;
For they know not the way of Jehovah, and the law of their God,
Therefore I will go to the nobles and speak to them,
For they know the way of Jehovah and the law of their God.
But these have all broken the yoke and burst the bonds.

25. Utter degeneracy of the people (6 10-14)

To whom shall I speak and testify that they may hear?
Behold, their ear is uncircumcised so that they cannot hearken;
Behold, the word of Jehovah has become to them a reproach, they have no pleasure in it.
Therefore I am full of the wrath of Jehovah; I am weary of restraining myself.
I must pour it out upon the children in the street and upon the assembly of young men,
For both the husband and the wife shall be taken, the aged and him that is advanced in years.
And their houses shall be turned over to others, their fields to robbers.
For from the least even to the greatest of them, each greedily robs,
And from the prophet even to the priest each deals deceitfully.
They heal the hurt of my people as though it were slight,
Saying, 'Peace, peace,' when there is no peace.

Thus saith Jehovah, Stand ye in the ways and see,
And ask for my paths, the paths of the past,
And know where is the good way and walk therein,
Thus ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, 'We will not go.'

26. Deaf to Jehovah's warnings (16)

Thus saith Jehovah, Behold a people is coming from the northland,
And a great nation is arousing itself from the uttermost parts of the earth.
They lay hold on bow and spear; they are cruel and merciless.
Their din is like the roaring of the sea, and they ride upon horses.
Everyone is arrayed as a man for battle against thee, O daughter of Zion.

27. The advancing agents of judgment (22. 23)

We have heard the report of it; our hands become feeble;
Anguish taketh hold of us, pangs as of a woman in travail.
Go not forth into the field, nor walk by the highway,
For there is the sword of the enemy, terror on every side.
O my people, gird thee with sackcloth, and sprinkle thyself with ashes;
Take up mourning as for an only son, bitter lamentation;
For the destroyer shall suddenly come upon us.

28. Effect upon the people of Judah (24-26)

I. **Jeremiah of Anathoth.** About an hour's walk over the Mount of Olives to the north of Jerusalem lay the little village of Anathoth, the home of Jeremiah the son of Hilkiah. The town is mentioned only a few times in Hebrew history. Thither, in the days of Solomon, Abiathar, of the house of Eli, was banished because of his connection with the conspiracy of Adonijah. In the late priestly passage of Joshua 21[18], the village is also referred to as the residence of certain priestly families. The superscription to Jeremiah's prophecy states that his father, Hilkiah, was one of these priests. It is exceedingly probable, therefore, that in Jeremiah's veins ran the blood of Eli and of the valiant Abiathar who followed David in his outlaw period. The sense of having been called, even before his birth, to be a prophet was strong within the mind of the young Jeremiah and points to an unusual inheritance. In the priestly families at Anathoth Israel's better traditions apparently sur-

vived to find in Jeremiah their noblest exponent. Except in his deep interest in religion, there is in the records of his work almost no suggestion of the priestly point of view. Descent from a priest like Abiathar, who was excluded from participating officially in the service of the temple, is also the most natural explanation of Jeremiah's indifference to the ritual.

The reference in the thirty-second chapter of his prophecy to his purchase of a field belonging to his uncle indicates that Jeremiah belonged to one of the prosperous families of Anathoth. Among the rolling hills of Benjamin, which look down toward the Dead Sea, he grew up in close touch with nature, amidst the quiet, austere influences of a little Palestinian village. Anathoth, however, was but a suburb of Jerusalem, so that from his earliest boyhood he was undoubtedly acquainted with the life and in close touch with the forces at work in the capital. His inheritance, home life and environment were clearly all important factors in the making of the prophet.

II. **Jeremiah's Call to be a Prophet.** Jeremiah must have been born during the closing years of Manasseh's reign, and was therefore a contemporary of King Josiah and of the royal prophet, Zephaniah. His call apparently came to him the same year in which Zephaniah delivered his powerful reform sermons (626–5 B.C.). He has given a wonderful picture of that inner struggle which resulted in his taking up the task of a religious reformer. The advance of the dread Scythians was evidently the immediate occasion. The need of some one to raise the note of warning and to arouse the nation to repentance appealed powerfully to the young priest from Anathoth. In his sensitive mental state every object which he saw constituted a personal call to duty. The sight of an almond tree, the first to put out its leaves in the early spring-time, suggested the ever-watchful, protecting presence of Jehovah. A caldron, which threatened to overturn and empty its burning hot contents, was a grim reminder of the dread Scythian flood that was about to sweep down from the north.

Jeremiah's disposition was shy and shrinking, and he was very conscious of his youth. As his active ministry covered a period of over forty years, he was probably not more than twenty or twenty-five years old when he responded to the divine promptings within him and became a prophet. In the form of a dialogue between himself and Jehovah he tells of the strenuous struggle between natural inclination and what he recognized as the voice of God within him. So vividly did the divine call come to him that he seemed to hear Jehovah speaking to him

audibly. The conflict apparently lasted for some days, if not weeks; but when Jeremiah finally yielded to the call to serve his race and God, the surrender was absolute. Henceforth his time, his inclinations, his domestic instincts, his reputation, and his very life were completely consecrated to his divine task.

Probably the account of his call was prepared as an introduction to the collection of his early prophecies which he made twenty years later (§ LXXXVI). It reveals that invincible faith in Jehovah which made him ever fearless and persistent in the face of the bitter persecutions and dangers which continued throughout his ministry. As he looked back from the vantage point of twenty years of actual experience, he realized that he had stood like a fortified city, unconquered, although besieged by princes and priests and all classes in the nation.

III. **Jeremiah's Demand for a Fundamental Reformation.** The same conditions that confronted Zephaniah are reflected in Jeremiah's early reform sermons found in chapters 2 to 6. Immorality, the worship of the Canaanite Baalim at the old high places, many foreign customs and rites, and, above all, a defiant disregard for the noble ethical and spiritual teachings of the true prophets, characterized the national life of Judah. All these evils Jeremiah sternly denounces in his early reform sermons, but with a deep pathos and a note of entreaty which appeal to the heart even more strongly than to the reason. His original sermons, in this period at least, all appear, like those of Zephaniah, to have been cast in the impassioned five-beat measure, which expressed deep emotion and suggested to his hearers the lamentations of those who wailed over the dead. In words burning with patriotism and religious fervor he entreats and pleads with his nation to recall Jehovah's tender care for them from the first, and to show toward the divine Father the gratitude and loyalty which that care should evoke. He paints in all its heinousness Israel's infidelity and ingratitude. Scorn, argument, invective and entreaty are marvellously blended in his utterances. He demands, in the name of Jehovah, not merely external reform but a change in the ideas and ideals and purposes of his people, so fundamental that henceforth they will loathe, as did Jeremiah himself, the old corrupt heathenism and will turn submissively and obediently as children to the divine Father, seeking simply to do his will. Like Hosea, he proclaims Jehovah's readiness, yea, his passionate eagerness, to forgive his people, if they will but turn to him with deep, true contrition.

IV. **The Foe from the North.** When Jeremiah found that reason and entreaty failed to reach the people, he resorted, as did Zephaniah,

to impressive warnings. In language so powerful and vivid that one can in imagination see the hordes of rapidly advancing Scythians ravaging and destroying all before them, he describes the agent with which Jehovah is about to punish and purify his guilty and corrupt people. At times, however, the soul of the patriot within him gains the mastery and he sobs over the terrible fate about to overtake his beloved nation, but, more than all, he bewails the guilt and impenitence which made deliverance impossible.

V. **Jeremiah's Literary Figures.** In their relation to their nation, in their teachings and in their use of literary figures, there is a close similarity between the work of Hosea and that of Jeremiah. Both loved their race with a strong, undying devotion, and both were compelled to stand by and see their nation rush on to its ruin, heedless of their faithful warnings. The domestic life of each, also, was a tragedy: Hosea's, because of the infidelity of his wife, and Jeremiah's, because the joys of domestic life were deliberately renounced that he might devote all his time and energies to what proved the hopeless task of saving the nation. In the midst of their tragic experiences both of these men reached heights and depths of religious experience attained by few, if any, of the other prophets.

Jeremiah recognizes his close kinship with the earlier patriot-prophet of Northern Israel. He proclaims it by his free use of Hosea's striking figures. Thus, for example, he compares the relation between Jehovah and the nation to that of a husband and wife, and speaks of Jehovah's marriage to Judah and the joy of the early bridal period. He likens Judah's apostasy to the infidelity of a wife toward her husband and designates it as mere harlotry (*cf.* § LXIX). Jeremiah also uses Hosea's other favorite figure of a father in describing Jehovah's watchful care for his children. Jeremiah, like Hosea, is fond of striking figures, drawn from ordinary life. With a word or two he often paints a picture so vivid that it never fades from the memory, or, if so, is constantly recalled by familiar scenes.

Jeremiah's sermons are not, as a rule, knit together into a close logical sequence. Their logic is that of the emotions. Almost within the same paragraph he appeals to the patriotism, to the conscience, to fear, to the reason, to the feelings and to the artistic senses of his hearers. He thus plays upon all those chords whereby it was possible to reach and influence the wills of his fellow-countrymen.

VI. **Jeremiah's Early Messages to His People.** Jeremiah's message, to be appreciated, must be felt as well as grasped intellectually.

The wider and deeper the spiritual experience of the reader, the greater the understanding and the appreciation of the prophet's thought. His message to his countrymen in the days preceding the reformation of Josiah was by no means a new one. There is the same exalted sense of Jehovah's justice as in the sermons of Amos and Isaiah. Jehovah, however, is more than the impartial judge; he is the God of love, striving through all the experiences which come to his people to awaken in them that sense of gratitude and loyalty which will make it possible for him to lavish upon them the evidences of his deep affection.

Jeremiah's first aim, therefore, was to arouse the nation to appreciate its own guilt and prepare the way for true contrition and divine forgiveness. His originality lies in his effective putting of the old truths. The folly of idolatry and apostasy is revealed as never before. The repentance, which he demands, must take possession of the whole man, transforming not merely the external acts but also the mainsprings of action, the heart and will. The God who speaks through his prophecies is a God who yearns with a divine passion for the love and fidelity of his people. It is not strange that his words took hold of king and priests and people, stirring them to acts unprecedented in the history of the Hebrew race. Even though Jeremiah's ideal of a fundamental, spiritual conversion was by no means fully realized, the iconoclastic deeds of the reformers reveal the intensity of the zeal thus aroused.

§ LXXXIII. THE GREAT REFORMATION UNDER JOSIAH

1. Plans for the repair of the temple (II K. 22 3-7)

Now in the eighteenth year of King Josiah, the king sent Shaphan the son of Azaliah, the son of Meshullam, the scribe, to the temple of Jehovah, saying, Go up to Hilkiah the priest, that he may return the full amount of the money which is brought into the temple of Jehovah, which the keepers of the threshold have gathered from the people, and let them deliver it into the hands of the workmen who have the oversight of the temple of Jehovah; that they may give it to the workmen who are in the temple of Jehovah, to repair the decayed parts of the temple—to the carpenters and the builders and the masons—as well as to buy timber and hewn stone to repair the temple. However, there was no reckoning made with them regarding the money that was delivered into their hands, for they dealt faithfully.

2. Report of the discovery of the book of the law to Josiah (8-10)

Then Hilkiah the priest said to Shaphan the scribe, I have found the book of the law in the temple of Jehovah. And Hilkiah delivered the book to Shaphan, and he read it. And Shaphan the scribe went to the king and also brought the king word, saying, Your servants have emptied out the money that was found in the temple and have delivered it into the hands of the workmen who have the oversight of the temple of Jehovah. And Shaphan the scribe told the king, saying, Hilkiah the priest has given me a book. And Shaphan read it before the king.

3. His reception of it (11-13)

But when the king had heard the words of the book of the law, he tore his clothes. And the king commanded Hilkiah the priest and Ahikam the son of Shaphan, and Achbor the son of Micaiah, and Shaphan the scribe, and Asaiah the king's servant, saying, Go, inquire of Jehovah for me and for the people and for all Judah, concerning the words of this book that is found; for great is the wrath of Jehovah that is kindled against us, because our fathers have not hearkened to the words of this book, to do just as is written in it concerning us.

4. Huldah's prediction regarding Judah and Josiah (14-16. 18-20)

So Hilkiah the priest and Ahikam and Achbor went to Huldah the prophetess, the wife of Shallum, the son of Tikvah, the son of Harhas, keeper of the wardrobe, who dwelt in Jerusalem in the second quarter, and they conversed with her. And she said to them, Thus saith Jehovah, the God of Israel: 'Tell the man who sent you to me, "Thus saith Jehovah: I am now about to bring evil upon this place and upon its inhabitants, even all the threats of the book which the king of Judah hath read."' But to the king of Judah, who sent you to inquire of Jehovah, this shall you say to him, 'Thus saith Jehovah, the God of Israel: "As regards the words which thou hast heard—because thy heart was penitent, and thou didst humble thyself before Jehovah, when thou heardest what I spoke against this place and against its inhabitants, that they should become an object of dread and execration, and hast torn thy garments and wept before me, I also have heard thee, saith Jehovah. Therefore I will gather thee to thy fathers and thou shalt be borne to thy grave in peace, neither shall thine eyes see

all the evil which I will bring upon this place." ' So they brought back word to the king.

5. Public reading and promulgation of the new code (23 1-3a. c)

And the king sent, and they gathered to him all the elders of Judah and of Jerusalem. And the king went up to the temple of Jehovah, and with him all the men of Judah and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, as well as the priests and the prophets and all the people, both small and great; and he read in their hearing all the words of the book of the covenant which was found in the temple of Jehovah. And the king stood by the pillar and made a covenant before Jehovah to establish the words of this covenant that were written in his book. And all the people confirmed the covenant.

6. Josiah's practical reforms in Judah and Jerusalem (4-14)

And the king commanded Hilkiah the high priest and the second priest and the keepers of the threshold to bring out from the temple of Jehovah all the vessels that were made for Baal and for Asherah and for all the host of heaven; and he burned them without Jerusalem in the lime-kilns by the Kidron, and carried their ashes to Bethel. He also deposed the idolatrous priests, whom the kings of Judah had ordained to offer sacrifice at the high places in the cities of Judah, and in the places around about Jerusalem; those also who offered sacrifices to Baal, to the sun, the moon, and the planets, and all the host of heaven. And he brought the asherah from the temple of Jehovah outside Jerusalem to the Brook Kidron and burned it at the Brook Kidron, beat it to dust, and cast its dust upon the graves of the common people. And he broke down the houses of the sacred prostitutes who were in the temple of Jehovah, where the women wove tunics for the asherah. And he brought all the priests out of the cities of Judah and defiled the high places, where the priests had offered sacrifices, from Geba to Beersheba. And he broke down the high places of the satyrs, that stood at the entrance of the gate of Joshua the governor of the city, which were on the left as one enters the gate of the city. Nevertheless the priests of the high places did not come up to the altar of Jehovah in Jerusalem, but ate unleavened bread among their kinsmen. He also defiled Topheth, which is in the valley of Ben-Hinnom, that no man might make his son or his daughter to pass through

the fire to Molech. And he took away the horses that the kings of Judah had given to the sun, at the entrance of the temple of Jehovah, by the chamber of Nathan-melech the chamberlain, and he burned up the chariots of the sun. And the altars that were on the roof, which the kings of Judah had made, and the altars which Manasseh had made (in the two courts of the temple of Jehovah) the king broke off and beat down from there and cast the dust from them into the Brook Kidron. And the high places that were east of Jerusalem, to the south of the hill of the destroyer, which Solomon the king of Israel had built for Ashtarte, the abomination of the Sidonians, and for Chemosh, the abomination of Moab, and for Milcom, the abomination of the Ammonites, the king defiled. And he broke in pieces the pillars, and cut down the asherahs and filled their places with the bones of men.

7. Destruction of the altars and high places of Samaria (15.19.20)

Moreover the altar that was at Bethel, and the high place which Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel sin, had made, even that altar and the high place he tore down, and broke in pieces its stones and beat it to dust and burned the asherah. Also all the temples of the high places that were in the cities of Samaria, which the kings of Israel had made to provoke Jehovah to anger, Josiah took away and did to them just as he had done at Bethel. And all the priests of the high places, who were there, he slew upon the altars and burned men's bones upon them. Then he returned to Jerusalem.

8. Observance of the passover (21-23)

And the king commanded all the people, saying, Keep the passover to Jehovah your God, as it is prescribed in this book of the covenant. For such a passover as this had not been kept from the days of the judges who judged Israel, and during the days of the kings of Israel and the kings of Judah; but in the eighteenth year of King Josiah this passover was kept to Jehovah in Jerusalem.

9. Josiah's fidelity to the law (24. 25)

Moreover the mediums, the wizards, the idols, and all the abominations that were seen in the land of Judah and in Jerusalem, Josiah put away, that he might establish the words of the law which were written in the book that Hilkiah the priest found in the temple of Jehovah. And before him there was no king like him who turned to Jehovah with

all his heart and with all his soul and with all his might according to all the law of Moses; neither after him did any arise like him.

10. Reform laws: to destroy all heathen shrines (Dt. 12 1-4)

These are the statutes and the judicial decisions which ye shall faithfully observe in the land which Jehovah, the God of thy fathers, hath given thee as a possession, all the days that ye may live upon the earth. Ye shall destroy all the places in which the nations, that ye shall dispossess, served their gods, upon the high mountains and upon the hills and under every green tree; and ye shall break down their altars, and dash in pieces their pillars, and burn their asherahs with fire; and ye shall hew down the graven images of their gods; and ye shall destroy their name out of that place. Ye shall not do as they do to Jehovah your God.

11. To set up no heathen symbols (16 21. 22)

Thou shalt not plant an asherah, which thou shalt make of any kind of tree, beside the altar of Jehovah thy God; neither shalt thou set up a pillar which Jehovah thy God hateth.

12. Procedure in punishing disloyalty to Jehovah (17 2-7)

If there be found in the midst of thee, within any of thy cities which Jehovah thy God is about to give thee, a man or a woman, who doeth that which is evil in the sight of Jehovah thy God, in transgressing his covenant, and hath gone and served other gods and worshipped them, or the sun, or the moon, or the host of heaven, which I have not commanded, and it be reported to thee and thou hast heard of it, then shalt thou investigate thoroughly, and if it prove to be true and be established that such abomination hath been committed in Israel, then thou shalt bring forth that man or woman, who hath done this evil, to thy gates, even the man or the woman; and thou shalt stone them to death. On the testimony of two or three witnesses shall he who is condemned be put to death. He shall not be put to death on the testimony of one witness. The hands of the witnesses shall first be raised against him to put him to death, and then the hands of all the people. Thus thou shalt purge the evil from thy midst.

I. **The Reformers of Judah.** In the light of the narrative of Kings it is evident that Zephaniah and Jeremiah did not stand alone in their efforts for reform. At the head of the Jerusalem temple was Hilkiah, the priest, in full sympathy with the new movement. Josiah, also, in the course of his reign, had gathered about him a group of able officials who supported him in his reform measures. Later, in their attitude toward Jeremiah during the reactionary reign of Jehoiakim, they revealed the strength of their devotion to the teachings of the true prophet. Before a successful and permanent reformation could be carried through, however, it was necessary to formulate the teaching of the earlier prophets in definite regulations which could be set before the people and rigidly enforced. The account of Josiah's reformation clearly indicates that this need was fully appreciated and suggests how it was met by the new school of prophetic reformers.

II. **The Finding of the Law in the Temple.** The account of the finding of the book of the law in the temple is usually interpreted as implying that the discovery was accidental. Possibly Hilkiah himself was unaware of its existence. It is significant, however, that when the law-book was found, the spirit of reform was in the air and had already led to the repair of the temple. It is also certain that some hand had placed the law within the sacred precincts. The account of its discovery and the radical reforms which followed its promulgation suggest that, although many of the laws were doubtless old, the code as a whole was new. Its perfect adaptation to the conditions which grew out of the reactionary reign of Manasseh also indicates that it was formulated with a view to correcting these definite evils. Its public discovery at the opportune moment may well have been a part of the programme of the zealous reformers. If so, their plans proved thoroughly successful.

The great influence of the prophets in Judah during the reign of Josiah is obvious. Confirmation of the authority of the book was secured, not by referring it to Hilkiah, the head of the priesthood, but to a certain otherwise unknown prophetess, Huldah, who, perhaps being the eldest, was recognized as the head of the prophetic order. Her reply is cast in the language peculiar to the book of Deuteronomy.

III. **The Detailed Reforms.** The account of the promulgation of the newly found law-book is of great interest because it throws light upon the way in which in ancient Israel a new code became the law of the realm. In Judah it was easily possible to gather the people in a great popular assembly. The new code was evidently not long, for it was

quickly read before the assembled nation. Then the king solemnly swore to accept it and to rule in accord with the terms of this code; and the people, by popular acclaim, ratified his action.

An iconoclastic reformation is always deplorable, for it brings an inevitable reaction. Josiah's reformation proved no exception to the rule; and yet it is easy to see why the prophetic reformers felt the need of drastic measures. The symbols of the old Canaanite and the newer Assyrian forms of worship were first destroyed. Even the asherahs, the sacred poles, and the pillars, which were regarded as legitimate by the early prophetic historians, were now torn down, for, in the more enlightened age, they were seen to be dangerous and degrading. More sweeping still was Josiah's destruction of the ancient high places, which were Canaanite in their origin, but had later been consecrated to the worship of Jehovah. Each little village was deprived of its local shrine; and the royal temple at Jerusalem was henceforth declared to be the only legitimate sanctuary of the realm. Even the ancient high place at Bethel, hallowed by the traditions of Jacob and the worship of the Northern Israelites through many centuries, was destroyed by the uncompromising reformers who gathered about Josiah. The late editor of Kings also asserts that the king laid waste the other high places throughout Samaria and slew their priests upon the altars.

At the conclusion of this sweeping reform the ancient feast of the passover was celebrated by the people, not in their homes or at the local sanctuaries, as had been the earlier custom, but in the temple at Jerusalem which the reformers sought to make the centre of all of Judah's ceremonial worship.

While Josiah's strong hand ruled Judah, the representatives of the old superstitions were not tolerated within the bounds of his kingdom. The letter as well as the spirit of the new law-book was rigidly enforced. The account of the reformation implies that it dealt simply with external religious forms. Symbols and rites are the first objects to be attacked by a zealous reformer. The fact that Jeremiah is practically silent regarding the effects of Josiah's reforms, and later laments the absence of a fundamental change in the hearts and lives of his fellow-countrymen, and the sad reaction that came during the reign of Jehoiakim, all point to the inevitable conclusion that, while Josiah's reformation was significant, it failed to realize the higher spiritual ideals of the great ethical prophets.

IV. **The Basis of the Reformation.** In the light of a careful comparison of the account of Josiah's reformation with the laws found in

the twelfth and immediately following chapters of Deuteronomy, there is little doubt that these represent the new book of the covenant which was placed in the hands of Josiah. Each reform, which he is reported to have carried through, is definitely enjoined in these Deuteronomic laws. The spirit which actuated the reformers also characterizes these regulations. The evils which the new laws endeavored to correct were clearly before the lawgivers when they wrote out the different enactments. In their eyes apostasy was treason both to Jehovah and the state and therefore to be punished by the death penalty. No mercy is shown to the representatives of those particular types of heathenism which came to the front in the days of Manasseh. In the light of these facts it would appear that many of these laws were formulated in the early days of Josiah's reign or else on the eve of the great reformation.

V. **The Present Form of Deuteronomy.** In its present form Deuteronomy is a compendium of laws dealing with a great variety of subjects and coming from many different periods. Chapters 1–4 contain a hortatory introduction, placed by a later editor in the mouth of Moses, thus making Israel's founder the representative of the later prophets whose teachings are the basis of the laws which follow. The laws themselves are found in chapters 5–26. The familiar prophetic decalogue is first introduced, with hortatory additions, in chapter 5. Chapters 6–11 contain a series of exhortations based on the first command of the prophetic decalogue. The next division, chapters 12^{1}–17^{7}, consists of ceremonial and religious laws. In 17^{8}–18^{22} the appointment and duties of the judges, kings, priests and prophets are described. Chapter 19 contains a collection of criminal laws, to which may be added 21^{1-9}. A group of military laws is found in 20 and 21^{10-14}. The next section, 21^{15}–25^{19}, contains a miscellaneous collection of civil, criminal, humane and religious regulations. Many of these laws repeat the enactments found in the other groups. They appear to be a series of supplements added to the preceding collection. Chapter 26 deals with the sacred dues, and 27 preserves the tradition regarding the recording of the law at Mount Ebal and the solemn formula which the people were to rehearse in order to emphasize the more essential laws. Chapters 28–30 contain promises of blessings, in case these laws are kept, and curses and warnings, in case they are disregarded. Chapter 31 gives the tradition regarding the preservation of the law; 32 is a majestic psalm attributed to Moses. Chapter 33 is the later variant of the so-called, "Blessing of Jacob," found in Genesis 49. The last chapter of Deuteronomy takes up again the narrative of Numbers and tells of the

death and burial of Moses. Thus, as in the first four books of the Old Testament, songs, psalms, exhortations, warnings, curses, blessings, historic narratives, and criminal, civil, military, humane and ceremonial laws are all mingled together in this wonderful product of the later prophetic school.

VI. **The History of Deuteronomy.** The earliest edition of Deuteronomy apparently began with chapter 12 and possibly extended through chapter 19. Doubtless to this original nucleus the miscellaneous laws in 20^{15}–25^{19} were soon added. The foundation of all these laws is the group of primitive regulations preserved in Exodus 21^{1}–23^{19} (§§ LIX, LX). Only a few of these earlier laws are quoted word for word, but fully three-fourths of them are reproduced in the language peculiar to the authors of Deuteronomy. Where fundamental changes are introduced, they reveal the changed conditions and the influence of the higher principles proclaimed by the prophets of the Assyrian period. The fact that a nucleus of the laws and customs in the book of Deuteronomy was by tradition attributed to Moses, is the basis of the conjecture which grew into the later tradition that he was the author of all these laws. Doubtless many of these primitive regulations reflect the principles laid down by Israel's first great prophet-judge; but it is equally clear that many of the laws of Deuteronomy deal with specific problems and embody prophetic teachings first proclaimed in the eighth and seventh centuries before Christ. Deuteronomy, therefore, represents the germinal truths enunciated by Moses, as they gradually unfolded in the light of the later experiences of his race and under the influence of the inspired teachings of his later successors in the prophetic office.

Amos's high ideal of civic and social justice; Hosea's and Amos's distrust of the high places and the prevailing heathen symbolism, and Hosea's exalted doctrine of love to God, to one's fellowmen and to all created things, are some of the most important doctrines which are reproduced in the form of the definite, concrete regulations of Deuteronomy.

The introductions and appendices to the original nucleus of the book are clearly from later hands. The Babylonian exile casts its shadows across certain of these chapters and explains that fervid earnestness which characterizes the entreaties and curses. In its final form, therefore, Deuteronomy is one of the many Old Testament books which came from the troublesome days of the exile.

VII. **The Characteristics of Deuteronomy.** The book of Deuteronomy is unique among the law-books of antiquity. In it the work of

the priests and prophets blend, although its point of view from beginning to end is more prophetic than legal. Not only is it introduced by earnest prophetic exhortations, but frequent warnings and exhortations are found in connection with the individual laws. Few penalties are prescribed. The authors of these laws evidently aimed to appeal to the conscience of the people and to provide definite regulations to guide the conduct of the ordinary citizen rather than the action of the judges in the public tribunal. A strong democratic and philanthropic spirit characterizes the entire book. The rights of the needy, the defenceless and the oppressed are championed at every turn. A strenuous attempt is made to guard against the misuse of power by judges, kings and others in authority. There are few criminal laws, the regulations of the earlier code being accepted as sufficient and final. Loyalty and obedience to the divine commands, respect for the teachings of the true prophets. a purified ritual, and a recognition of the laws of justice and love in all the relations between man and man are the subjects most emphasized. Excepting in the harsh and severe laws dealing with the surviving remnants of the old heathenism, a commanding love for God and man everywhere dominates this early gospel.

§ LXXXIV. CEREMONIAL, CIVIL AND PHILANTHROPIC REGULATIONS OF THE DEUTERONOMIC CODE

SACRIFICE AND CEREMONIAL CLEANLINESS

1. Place and method of sacrifice (Dt. 12 13. 14. 27)

Take heed not to offer thy burnt-offerings in every place that thou seest; but in the place which Jehovah shall choose in one of thy tribes, there thou shalt offer thy burnt-offerings, and there thou shalt do all that I command thee. And thou shalt offer thy burnt-offerings, the flesh and the blood, upon the altar of Jehovah thy God; and the blood of thy sacrifices shall be poured out upon the altar of Jehovah thy God; and thou shalt eat the flesh.

2. Perfect animals (15 21)

If an animal have any blemish, such as lameness or blindness or any evil blemish whatever, thou shalt not sacrifice it to Jehovah thy God.

3. Special offerings (12 17. 18)

Thou mayest not eat within thy gates the tithe of thy grain of thy new wine, or of thine oil, or of the firstlings of thy herd or of thy flock, or any of thy votive-offerings which thou vowest, nor thy voluntary-offerings, nor the special

gifts of thy hand; but thou shalt eat them before Jehovah thy God in the place which Jehovah thy God shall choose, together with thy son, thy daughter, thy male and female slaves, and the Levite who dwelleth in thy city; and thou shalt rejoice before Jehovah thy God over all which thou hast acquired.

4. Animals for food (12 15. 16)

Yet thou mayest to thy heart's desire kill and eat flesh within any of thy cities, according as Jehovah thy God hath blessed thee: the unclean and the clean may eat of it, as of the gazelle and as of the hart. Only ye shall not eat of the blood; thou shalt pour it out upon the earth as water.

5. Animals suitable for food (14 3. 6)

Thou shalt not eat any abominable thing. But every beast that parteth the hoof and cleaveth the cleft of the two hoofs and cheweth the cud among the beasts, that ye may eat.

6. Fish and birds (9-11)

These ye may eat of all that are in the waters; whatever hath fins and scales may ye eat; and whatever hath not fins and scales ye shall not eat; it is unclean to you. Of all clean birds ye may eat.

7. Insects and birds (19. 20)

But all winged swarming creatures are unclean to you; they shall not be eaten. Of all clean winged creatures ye may eat.

8. Carrion (21a)

Ye shall not eat of anything that dieth a natural death.

9. Disposal of body of capital offender (21 22. 23)

If a man have committed a sin deserving of death, and he be put to death, and thou hang him on a tree, his body shall not remain all night upon the tree, but thou shalt surely bury him the same day, for he that is hanged is accursed of God,—that thou defile not thy land which Jehovah thy God is about to give thee as an inheritance.

10. Rite in case of undetected murder (21 1-5)

If one be found slain in the land which Jehovah thy God is about to give thee as a possession, lying in the open field, and it be not known who hath smitten him, then thy elders and thy judges shall come out, and they shall measure the distance to the cities round about the one who is slain; and the elders of the city which is nearest to the slain man shall take from the herd a heifer which hath done no work nor drawn in the yoke; and the elders of that city shall bring down the heifer to a valley with running water, which hath been neither plowed nor sown, and shall break the heifer's neck there in the valley. And the priests the sons of Levi

shall come near; for Jehovah thy God hath chosen them to minister to him and to bless in the name of Jehovah, and every controversy and every stroke shall be according to their sentence.

SACRED DUES

11. Animals to be sacrificed to Jehovah (15 19-22)

All the first-born males of thy herd and of thy flock thou shalt consecrate to Jehovah thy God; thou shalt do no work with the first-born of thy herd, nor shear the first-born of thy flock. Thou, together with thy household, shalt eat it before Jehovah thy God year by year in the place which Jehovah shall choose. And if it have any blemish, such as lameness or blindness or any evil blemish whatever, thou shalt not sacrifice it to Jehovah thy God. Thou shalt eat it within thy gates; the unclean and the clean shall eat it alike, as the gazelle, and as the hart.

12. Method of presenting the first fruits (26 1-11)

When thou shalt come into the land which Jehovah thy God is about to give thee as an inheritance, and shalt possess it, and dwell therein, thou shalt take a part of the first of all the fruit of the ground, which thou shalt bring in from thy land that Jehovah thy God giveth thee; and thou shalt put it in a basket, and shalt go to the place in which Jehovah thy God shall choose to have his name dwell. And thou shalt come to the priest who shall be officiating in those days, and say to him, I declare this day to Jehovah thy God, that I have come to the land which Jehovah promised by oath to our fathers to give to us. Then the priest shall take the basket out of thy hand, and set it down before the altar of Jehovah thy God. And thou shalt speak out and say before Jehovah thy God, An Aramean ready to perish was my father; and he went down into Egypt, and resided there as an alien, few in number; and he became there a nation, great, mighty, and populous. And the Egyptians dealt evilly with us, and afflicted us, and laid upon us hard bondage. Then we cried to Jehovah, the God of our fathers, and Jehovah heard our cry, and saw our affliction, and our toil, and our oppression; and Jehovah brought us forth from Egypt with a strong hand, and with an outstretched arm, and with great terrors, and with signs, and with wonders; and he hath brought us into this place, and hath given us

this land, a land abounding with milk and honey. Now, therefore, I have brought the first of the fruit of the ground, which thou, O Jehovah, hast given me. And thou shalt set it down before Jehovah thy God; and thou shalt rejoice in all the good which Jehovah thy God hath given to thee and to thy household, together with the Levite and the alien who resideth in thy midst.

13. Presentation of the regular tithes (14 22-27)

Of all the produce of thy seed thou shalt take a tenth of all that groweth in the field each year, and before Jehovah thy God, in the place wherein he shall choose, to have his name dwell, thou shalt eat the tithe of thy grain, of thy new wine, and of thine oil, and the first-born of thy herd and of thy flock, that thou mayest learn to fear Jehovah thy God always. And if the way be too long for thee, so that thou art not able to carry it, because the place where Jehovah thy God shall choose to set his name, is too far from thee; when Jehovah thy God shall bless thee, thou shalt exchange thy offering for money, and shalt bind up the money in thy hand, and shalt go to the place which Jehovah thy God shall choose; and thou shalt spend the money for whatever thou desireth, for oxen, or for sheep, or for wine, or for strong drink, or for whatever thine appetite craveth; and thou shalt eat there before Jehovah thy God, and thou shalt rejoice together with thy household. Also thou shalt not forget the Levite who dwelleth within thy town, for he hath no portion nor inheritance with thee.

14. The payment of a vow (23 21-23)

When thou vowest a vow to Jehovah thy God, thou shalt not delay to pay it; for Jehovah thy God will surely require it of thee and it will be sin on thy part. But if thou refrain from making a vow, it shall be no sin on thy part. That which thy lips have declared thou shalt faithfully do, according as thou hast vowed to Jehovah thy God, a voluntary offering, which thou hast promised by word of mouth.

DUTIES AND INCOME OF THE LEVITICAL PRIESTS

15. To act as judges (21 5b)

Jehovah thy God hath chosen the priests the sons of Levi to minister to him, and to bless in the name of Jehovah. And according to their sentence shall every dispute and case of assault be decided.

16. To take charge of cases of leprosy (24 8)

Guard carefully against the plague of leprosy in that thou faithfully observe and follow all the directions which the Levitical priests give you. According to the commands which I gave them shall ye carefully do.

17. To encourage people (20 2-4)

When ye draw near to offer battle, the priest shall approach and speak to the people and say to them, Hear O Israel, ye are drawing near this day to fight against your enemies; do not lose heart, fear not, nor tremble, neither be afraid because of them; for Jehovah your God is going with you to fight for you against your enemies in order to deliver you.

18. No inheritance (18 1a. b. 2)

The Levitical priests, even all the tribe of Levi, shall have no portion nor inheritance with Israel. And they shall have no inheritance among their kinsmen; Jehovah is their inheritance, as he hath declared to them.

19. To have certain parts of the offerings (18 1a. c. 3-5)

The Levitical priests, even all the tribe of Levi, shall eat the offerings made by fire to Jehovah, and of that which belongs to him. And this shall be the priests' due from the people, from those who offer a sacrifice whether it be ox or sheep: they shall give to the priests the shoulder and the two cheeks and the stomach. The first-fruits of thy grain, of thy new wine, and of thine oil, and the first of the fleece of thy sheep thou shalt give him; for Jehovah thy God hath chosen him and his sons out of all thy tribes, to stand to minister in the name of Jehovah forever.

20. Rights of alien priests (18 6-8)

And if a Levite cometh from any of thy towns in all Israel, where he resideth, and cometh with a whole-hearted desire to the place which Jehovah shall choose; then he shall minister in the name of Jehovah his God, as do all his brethren the Levites, who serve Jehovah there. He shall have like portions to eat, besides that which cometh from the sale of his patrimony.

THE PRE-EXILIC SACRED CALENDAR

21. The sabbath for man and beast (5 12-15)

Observe the sabbath day, to keep it holy, as Jehovah thy God commanded thee. Six days shalt thou labor and do all thy work, but the seventh day is a sabbath to Jehovah thy God; in it thou shalt do no work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, not thy male or female slave, nor thine ox, nor thine ass, nor any of thy cattle, nor the alien who re-

sideth within thy city, that thy male and female slave may rest as well as thou. Thou shalt also remember that thou wast a slave in the land of Egypt, and Jehovah thy God brought thee out from there by a mighty hand and an outstretched arm; therefore Jehovah thy God commanded thee to keep the sabbath.

22. Keeping the passover (16 1-2)

Observe the month Abib, and keep the passover to Jehovah thy God; for in the month Abib Jehovah thy God brought thee forth from Egypt by night. And thou shalt sacrifice the passover to Jehovah thy God, both sheep and oxen, at the place where Jehovah shall choose to have his name dwell.

23. Method of observing it (4b-7. 8. 4a. 8)

None of the flesh which thou sacrificest the first day at evening shall remain throughout the night until the morning. Thou mayest not sacrifice the passover within any of thy cities, which Jehovah thy God giveth thee; but at the place where Jehovah thy God shall choose to have his name dwell, there thou shalt sacrifice the passover in the evening as the sun goes down, at the fixed time when thou camest forth from Egypt. And thou shalt cook and eat it in the place which Jehovah thy God shall choose; then thou shalt return home in the morning. Thou shalt eat no leavened bread with the passover; seven days shalt thou eat unleavened bread therewith, even the bread of affliction, for thou camest forth from the land of Egypt in trepidation; that thou mayest remember the day when thou camest forth out of the land of Egypt all the days of thy life. And for seven days no leaven shall be seen with thee in all thy territory. Six days thou shalt eat unleavened bread; and on the seventh day shall be an assembly to Jehovah thy God; in which thou shalt do no work.

24. Feast of weeks after beginning of harvest (9-11)

Seven weeks shalt thou number to thee; from the time thou beginnest to put the sickle to the standing grain shalt thou begin to number the seven weeks. And thou shalt keep the feast of weeks to Jehovah thy God according to the measure of the voluntary offering which thy hand shall present in proportion as Jehovah thy God blesseth thee. Thou and thy son and thy daughter, thy male and female slaves, and the Levite, who dwelleth in thy city, and the resident alien, the fatherless and the widow, who live with

thee, shall rejoice before Jehovah in the place where Jehovah thy God shall choose to have his name dwell.

25. Feast of tabernacles (16 13-17)

Thou shalt keep the feast of tabernacles seven days, after thou hast gathered in the products of thy threshing-floor and thy winepress. And thou shalt rejoice in thy feast, together with thy son and thy daughter, thy male and female slaves, the Levite, the resident alien, the fatherless, and the widow, who are within thy city. Seven days shalt thou keep a feast to Jehovah thy God in the place which Jehovah shall choose; because Jehovah thy God will bless thee in all thine increase and in all the work of thy hands, and thou shalt be altogether joyful. Three times in the year shall all thy males appear before Jehovah thy God in the place which he shall choose: at the feast of unleavened bread, and at the feast of weeks, and at the feast of tabernacles; and they shall not appear before Jehovah empty-handed; every man shall give as he is able according to the individual gift with which Jehovah thy God hath blessed thee.

26. Seventh year of release (15 1-3)

At the end of every seven years thou shalt make a release. And this is the nature of the release: every creditor shall remit that which he hath lent to his neighbor; he shall not exact of his neighbor or fellow-countryman, because Jehovah's release hath been proclaimed. Of a foreigner thou mayest exact it; but whatever of thine is with thy fellow-countryman let thy hand release.

27. Public reading of the law (31 10-12)

Moses gave the Israelites this command: At the end of every seven years in the year fixed for the release, at the feast of tabernacles, when all Israel cometh to see the face of Jehovah thy God in the place which he shall choose, thou shalt read this law before all Israel. Assemble the people, the men and the women and the children, as well as the aliens who reside within thy city, that they may hear, and learn, and fear Jehovah your God, and faithfully follow all the words of this law.

JUDICIAL AND CIVIL ORGANIZATION

28. Appointment and duties of local judges (16 18-20)

Judges and officers shalt thou appoint according to thy tribes in all the cities which Jehovah is about to give thee. The judges shall judge the people with righteous judgment. Thou shalt not pervert justice; thou shalt not show par-

tiality; neither shalt thou take a bribe, for a bribe blindeth the eyes of the wise and perverteth the words of the righteous. Justice and only justice shalt thou follow, that thou mayest live and inherit the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

29. Judge to witness punishment (25 1-3)

If there be a controversy between men and they come for a decision, and judgment is pronounced upon them, with the result that the righteous is vindicated and the wicked condemned, and if the culprit deserves to be beaten, then the judge shall make him lie down and be beaten in his presence with the number of blows corresponding to his crime. Forty blows may he inflict upon him, but no more, lest, if he add more blows than these, thy fellow-countryman be held in contempt in thine eyes.

30. Functions of the central court (17 8. 9)

If a question involve bloodshed or conflicting claims, or the plague of leprosy,—questions of controversy within thy city too difficult for thee to decide,—then thou shalt set out and go up to the place which the Lord thy God shall choose; and thou shalt come to the Levitical priests, and to the judge who shall be officiating in those days; and thou shalt inquire; and they shall make known to thee the proper judicial sentence.

31. Its decisions to be executed (10. 11)

Thou shalt act according to the tenor of the sentence which they shall make known to thee from that place which Jehovah shall choose; and thou shalt do exactly as they direct thee, according to the tenor of the instruction which they shall give thee, and according to the decision which they shall impart to thee, thou shalt do without departing from the sentence which they shall make known to thee, either to the right hand or to the left.

32. Refusal to accept its sentence (12. 13)

Should a man act presumptuously, so as not to hearken to the priest who standeth to minister there before the Lord thy God, or to the judge, that man shall die. Thus thou shalt purge away the evil from Israel, that all the people may take heed, and fear, and never again act presumptuously.

33. Witnesses (19 15)

One witness shall not stand up alone to testify against a man for any crime, nor for any sin which he has committed. By the testimony of two or three witnesses must a matter be established.

34. Punishment of a false witness (16-21)

If a malicious witness stand up against a man to accuse him of treason, then both the men who have the dispute shall stand before Jehovah, before the priests and the judges who shall be officiating in those days; and the judges shall thoroughly investigate; and should it prove that the witness is a false witness, and hath testified falsely against his countryman, then shall ye do to him as he purposed to do to his fellow-countryman; thus thou shalt purge away the evil from thy midst, that those who remain may heed and fear, and never again commit any such crime in thy midst. And thou shalt not show pity; life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot.

35. Duty of witness in executing sentence (17 7)

The witnesses shall first raise their hands against a murderer to put him to death, and afterward the hands of all the people. Thus thou shalt purge away the evil from thy midst.

36. The deliverance of the innocent manslayer (19 4-10)

And this is the rule in regard to the manslayer, who may flee to a city of refuge and live: whoso killeth his neighbor accidentally without having been his enemy formerly, as for example when a man goeth into the forest with his neighbor to cut wood, and he swingeth the ax with his hand to cut down a tree, and the head slippeth from the helve and striketh his neighbor, so that he dieth, the man shall flee to one of these cities and live; lest the avenger of blood pursue the manslayer, while he is enraged, and overtake him, because the way is long, and take his life, although he did not deserve to die, since he was not formerly the dead man's enemy. Therefore I command that thou shalt set apart three cities. And if Jehovah thy God enlarge thy borders, as he hath sworn to thy fathers, and give thee all the land which he promised to give to thy fathers, if thou shalt keep all this command to do it, which I command thee this day, in that thou love Jehovah thy God, and walk ever in his ways, then shalt thou add three other cities, besides these three, that innocent blood may not be shed in the midst of thy land, which Jehovah thy God giveth thee as an inheritance, and thus blood-guilt be upon thee.

37. But not of the murderer (11-13)

But if any man hate his neighbor, and lie in wait for him, and attack him and strike him mortally so that he die, and the murderer flee to one of the cities of refuge, the elders of his city shall send and bring him, and deliver

him into the hand of the avenger of blood, that he may die. Thou shalt have no mercy on him, but shall purge away the innocent blood from Israel, that it may go well with thee.

38. Qualifications of a king (17 14. 15)

When thou comest to the land which Jehovah thy God is about to give thee, and shalt possess it, and shalt dwell in it, and shalt say to thyself, I will set over me a king as have all the nations that are round about me, be sure to set over thee as king him whom Jehovah thy God shall choose; one from among thy fellow Israelites shalt thou set over thee as king; thou mayest not put a foreigner over thee who is not a fellow Israelite.

39. His obligations (16-17)

Only he shall not provide many horses for himself, nor shall he cause people to return to Egypt in order that he may provide many horses, since Jehovah hath said to you, Ye shall never again return that way. Neither shall he take many wives for himself, lest his heart turn away; neither shall he collect for himself great quantities of silver and gold.

40. Attitude toward the written law (18-20)

And when he sitteth upon his kingly throne he shall write for himself in a book a copy of this law which is in the charge of the Levitical priests; and he shall have it always with him, and he shall read in it daily as long as he lives, that he may learn to fear Jehovah his God, to take heed to observe all the words of this law and these statutes, that his heart be not lifted up above his kinsmen, and that he turn aside from this command neither to the right nor to the left, in order that he and his descendants may continue long to rule in the midst of Israel.

HUMANE REGULATIONS

41. Profit sharing (25 4)

Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when it treadeth out the grain.

42. Guarding public safety (22 8)

When thou buildest a new house, thou shalt make a parapet for thy roof, that thou bring not blood upon thy house, in case any man should fall from it.

43. Sparing the innocent (24 16)

Fathers shall not be put to death with their children, and children shall not be put to death with their fathers; each man shall be put to death simply for his own crime.

44. Avoiding cruelty (12. 13)

In the case of a poor man, thou shalt not sleep with his pledge; thou shalt surely restore to him the pledge at sunset, that he may sleep in his garment, and bless thee; thus thou wilt be counted righteous before Jehovah thy God.

45. Not to take a necessity (6)

No man shall take the mill or the upper millstone as a pledge, for thereby he taketh a man's life as a pledge.

46. Dealing with hired servants (14. 15)

Thou shalt not oppress a hired servant who is poor and needy, whether he be of thy own race, or of the resident aliens who are in thy land within thy city. On the same day thou shalt pay him his wages before the sun goeth down, for he is poor, and setteth his heart upon it; and let him not cry against thee to Jehovah, and thou be guilty of a crime.

47. Protection of slaves (23 15. 16)

Thou shalt not deliver to his master a slave who has fled from his master to thee. He shall dwell with thee in thy land, in the place which he shall choose within one of thy towns, where it pleases him best, without thy oppressing him.

48 Giving liberally to a freed slave (15 12-15)

If one of thy own race, a Hebrew man or a Hebrew woman, be sold to thee, he shall serve thee six years; then in the seventh year thou shalt let him go free. And when thou lettest him go free, thou shalt not let him go empty-handed; rather thou shalt furnish him liberally from thy flock, and thy threshing-floor, and thy winepress; according as Jehovah thy God hath blessed thee thou shalt give to him. And thou shalt remember that thou wast a slave in the land of Egypt, and that Jehovah thy God redeemed thee; therefore I now command thee to do this thing.

49. Not to wrong dependents (24 17. 18)

Thou shalt not pervert the justice due to the resident alien, or to the fatherless, nor take a widow's garment to pledge; but thou shalt remember that thou wast a slave in Egypt, and that Jehovah thy God redeemed thee from there; therefore I command thee to do this thing.

50. To love the alien (10 18b. 19)

Jehovah so loveth the resident alien that he giveth to him food and raiment. Love then the resident alien; for ye were once resident aliens in the land of Egypt.

51. To regard a man's feelings 24 10. 11)

When thou lendest thy neighbor any kind of loan, thou shalt not go into his house to take a pledge from him. Thou shalt stand without, and the man to whom thou dost lend shall bring out the pledge to thee.

Thou shalt not lend on interest to thy fellow-countryman: interest on money, food or on anything that is lent on interest. To a foreigner thou mayest lend on interest; but to thy fellow-countryman thou shalt not lend on interest, —that Jehovah thy God may bless thee in all that thou undertakest to do, in the land to which thou art going to possess it.

52. To take no interest from a Hebrew (23 19. 20)

If there be with thee a poor man, one of thy fellow-countrymen, in any of thy cities in thy land which Jehovah thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not be hardhearted, nor shut thy hand from thy poor brother; but thou shalt surely open thy hand to him, and shalt lend him sufficient for his need as he wanteth. Beware lest this base thought come in thy heart, The seventh year, the year of release, is at hand, and thou turn a deaf ear to thy poor brother, and thou give him nothing, and he cry to Jehovah against thee, and thou be guilty of a crime. Thou shalt surely give to him, and thy heart shall not be sad when thou givest to him, because for this Jehovah thy God will bless thee in all thy work, and in all that thou undertakest to do. For the poor will never cease to be in the land; therefore I command thee, Thou shalt surely open thy hand to thy brother, to thy needy, and to thy poor in thy land.

53. Not to refuse a loan to the poor (15 7-11)

When thou reapest thy harvest in thy field, and hast forgot a sheaf in thy field, thou shalt not go again to bring it; it shall be for the resident alien, for the fatherless, and for the widow, that Jehovah thy God may bless thee in all the work of thy hands. When thou beatest thy olive-tree, thou shalt not go over the boughs again; it shall be for the resident alien, for the fatherless, and for the widow. When thou gatherest the grapes of thy vineyard, thou shalt not glean it after thee; it shall be for the resident alien, for the fatherless, and the widow. Thou shalt remember that thou wast a slave in the land of Egypt; therefore I command thee to do this thing.

54. To leave a part of grain for the needy (24 19-22)

When thou hast made an end of tithing all the tithe of thy produce in the third year, which is the year of tithing, thou shalt give it to the Levite, to the resident alien, to the fatherless, and to the widow, that they may eat within thy city, and be filled. And thou shalt say before Jehovah

55. To give triennial tithe to the needy (26 12. 13)

thy God, I have put away the consecrated things out of my house, and have also given them to the Levite, and to the resident alien, to the fatherless, and to the widow, just as thou hast commanded me; I have not transgressed any of thy commands, neither have I forgotten them.

I. **The Value of the Deuteronomic Laws.** The laws contained in the book of Deuteronomy are of a twofold value to the modern student. Representing, as they do, Israel's legal development during the two or three centuries following the formulation and acceptance of the primitive decalogues in Ex. 21–23 (§§ LIX, LX), they afford an excellent basis for the study of the development of the inner institutional life of Judah, and reveal the practical fruitage of the activity of the prophets of the eighth and seventh centuries before Christ. In the second place, because of their high ethical and spiritual qualities, many of these laws will never cease to be a guide and inspiration to nations and individuals seeking to know and to do the will of God.

Naturally there is no reference in the account of Josiah's reformation to the philanthropic laws of Deuteronomy; but in the royal court and in the public tribunals, and especially in their appeal to the conscience of the race, they doubtless exerted a quiet yet pervasive influence, holding up before the nation, in clear and definite form, the principles which the true prophets proclaimed in public address and by personal example.

II. **The Laws Regarding Sacrifice and Ceremonial Cleanliness.** The earlier primitive codes had provided that men should rear altars and offer sacrifices anywhere throughout the land of Israel. The experience of the days of Manasseh had demonstrated that the heathen institutions which still clung to the local shrines were inimical to the pure worship of Jehovah. Through the sermons of Amos and Hosea one can see the drunkenness, the revelry, the loud songs and the immorality, which, under the guise of religion, characterized and debased the festivals held at these ancient shrines.

The new code provided that no sacrifice or offering should be presented to Jehovah, except in the temple at Jerusalem. There the reformers clearly hoped, under the shadow of the court and the direction of the leading priests and prophets of the realm, to guard the purity of the ceremonial worship against debasing heathen rites. Hitherto a portion of every animal slain for food had apparently been presented to Jehovah as a sacrifice. When all sacrifice was centralized in Jerusalem, it was

practically impossible to follow this ancient custom. Accordingly permission was given to kill animals and eat the flesh at any place, without any religious or ceremonial significance attaching thereto. The offerer was simply under obligation to respect the ancient Semitic belief that the blood of the animal represented the God-given life. Hence, the blood was not to be eaten, but poured upon the ground.

The Hebrews were also commanded not to eat the flesh of certain animals which were considered unclean. While the distinction between clean and unclean animals seems arbitrary, it appears to have been determined in certain cases by the habits of the animals thus distinguished or by the pleasant or loathsome impression which the beast or bird or fish made upon primitive man. Scavengers are, as a rule, thus excluded; also animals living in holes, and birds of the night. In many cases beasts and birds were doubtless regarded as unclean because they had been the totems of certain primitive Semitic tribes. The camel was probably placed under the ban for this reason.

In the Deuteronomic code there are few traces of the later detailed laws regarding ceremonial uncleanness. The only exceptions to this rule are two laws which apparently embody very ancient customs: the one directs that the body of one punished for a capital offence be buried at once; the other describes the rite of purification to be observed by the members of the community in case an undetected murderer has brought moral guilt upon a village or city. This rite perhaps represents a survival of the old Semitic institution, reflected in the code of Hammurabi, which assumed that every community was responsible for crimes committed in its midst. The ceremony was in itself a protest on the part of the community against the crime, and a symbolic prayer for that assurance of ceremonial purity in the sight of God which was given by Jehovah's representatives, the priests.

III. **Duties and Income of the Levitical Priests.** The Deuteronomic code knows nothing of the later distinction between the priests and the Levites. All priests are designated as "sons of Levi." This title was applied to those who had charge of the temple at Jerusalem as well as of the other ancient sanctuaries. From the laws regarding sacrifice it would also appear that, not the priest, but each individual offerer still slew the sacrificial victim, and himself presented certain parts to Jehovah. The rest he shared with his family and the dependent members of the community. In the case of the first-fruits, the priest received the basket containing them, and placed it before the altar of Jehovah. Otherwise there is little evidence that at this period the chief

duty of the priests was to offer the sacrifices. Instead, they figure most prominently as the representatives of Jehovah to whom civil, criminal and religious cases were referred for their judicial decision. Failure to abide by their decision was regarded as an act of impiety punishable by death. The method of procedure in dealing with cases of leprosy was also determined by them. On the eve of battle they encouraged the people by earnest exhortations. Above all, they were the teachers of the masses. By word, as well as by legal decision and symbol, the faithful priests taught the people how to worship and how to deal justly with one another. Thus the early priests were in a very true sense the successors of Israel's first great leader and judge, Moses. Through their decisions and counsels and teachings, they were, by virtue of the religious authority attributed to them, in a position to exert a powerful influence upon the life and faith of the people.

Their regular income included those parts of the burnt-offerings which were not entirely consumed: the shoulder, the two cheeks, the stomach of every ox or sheep that was sacrificed, and the first-fruits of the grain, wine and oil, and the first fleece of every flock. This comparatively meagre means of support was supplemented by the privilege of sharing in the family feasts at the sanctuary and of receiving a part of the triennial tithe. The amount, however, in each case was determined by the generosity of the individual offerer. The frequent exhortations in Deuteronomy not to forget the Levite indicate that there was great need of arousing this generosity, and imply that the Levites often suffered actual want.

When the many sanctuaries outside of Jerusalem were abolished, Josiah, in accordance with the regulations of the new law-book, permitted those who ministered at these ancient shrines to come and share the income of the Jerusalem temple. Few, however, appear to have responded.

A little later, in Ezekiel's code, these outsiders are designated as the Levites, in distinction from the priests—the descendants of those who had hitherto ministered at the Jerusalem temple. By Ezekiel and in the later codes, the more menial positions and duties are assigned to these Levites. The law of Deuteronomy, therefore, represents the beginning of that great movement which fundamentally transformed the position and functions of the priestly class.

IV. **The Pre-Exilic Sacred Calendar.** The book of Deuteronomy reveals the great changes which were gradually being made in Israel's ceremonial institutions. The old nomadic festivals had become dis-

tinctly agricultural feasts. The sabbath was pre-eminently a day of rest for laboring man and beast. Thus its social and philanthropic character was primarily emphasized. Already "the sabbath was for man, not man for the sabbath."

The dates of the three great annual festivals were still left indeterminate, except that the feast of weeks was to begin seven weeks after the ripening of the first grain in the month of March-April. The passover marked the beginning of the harvest, which in Palestine came about the end of March. Hitherto it had been a family festival, observed at the home or else at the local high places. The Deuteronomic law-givers, in accordance with their aim to centralize all worship, enacted that the paschal lamb should be sacrificed and eaten only at Jerusalem under the shadow of Jehovah's temple. They provided, however, that the feast should first be observed at home for seven days, during which no leavened bread should be eaten. The seventh day was to be celebrated by a general assembly of the people.

The second great feast, the feast of weeks, corresponded to the feast of the harvest in the primitive codes. It marked the end of the grain harvest, just as the passover marked the beginning. Its date was dependent upon the season; but it had usually come in the latter part of May. In the code of Deuteronomy its date was fixed just seven weeks after the beginning of the passover in order that it might be celebrated in all parts of the country at the same time. At this feast the men again came up to Jerusalem with their families to present to Jehovah a voluntary offering proportionate to the extent of their harvest. It was a time when rich and poor feasted together and gave thanks to Jehovah who had blessed them with the fruits of the soil.

The third great national festival, known in the primitive codes as the feast of ingathering, was designated in the law-book of Deuteronomy as the feast of booths or tabernacles. It was the concluding agricultural festival of the year, when the fruits of the field had been gathered in and the grain thrashed on the thrashing-floor and the wine was fresh from the presses. In the later priestly codes its date was fixed in the latter part of September. In spirit and character it corresponded closely to the old New England Thanksgiving. In the early days it had been celebrated on the thrashing floors or beside the wine-presses or at the local sanctuary; but the Deuteronomic law-givers provided that it should be observed for seven days at the central sanctuary at Jerusalem. Like the other festivals, it was a time of rejoicing and thanksgiving, when all members of the community feasted together, sharing their

offerings with the slaves, the Levites, the resident aliens, the fatherless, and the widows. Every man, woman and child was expected to go up at this time to Jerusalem and to take as an offering what he was able.

The effect of these feasts upon the life of the community cannot be overestimated. In forms that were natural and joyful, they developed the worshipful instincts of the people. They emphasized the unity of the nation and its obligations of loyalty and service to Jehovah. They also developed the democratic and generous spirit; for all classes feasted together, sharing a common meal. Moreover, they gave the religious leaders, the priests, the prophets and the sages, an opportunity to come into close touch with the people and to teach them, at a time when the minds of their hearers were especially free from care and open to receive new truths.

V. **Judicial and Civil Organization.** The Deuteronomic law-givers accepted the existing judicial organization, but sought to define still further the duties and responsibilities of judges and witnesses. They also provided for a central court of appeal, consisting chiefly of the Levitical priests at the Jerusalem sanctuary. To this central court, as a final authority, important and difficult criminal, civil and ceremonial cases were to be referred. This provision was probably a result of the dominant aim to centralize all judicial as well as religious authority in Jerusalem.

In earlier times an ancient custom had obtained which permitted every man who had shed the life of a human being to find refuge from the avenger of blood at Jehovah's altar. Thus, every high place was an asylum for the innocent man-slayer, and the primitive codes had provided that only a deliberate murderer should be denied this privilege (§ LIX[2]). When these high places were abolished by the Deuteronomic law-givers, it became necessary, out of deference to the ancient custom, to establish certain cities of refuge at convenient distances throughout the land. According to the late tradition in Joshua 20, the three west-Jordan cities of refuge were Kadesh in Galilee, Shechem in the hill country of Ephraim, and Hebron in southern Judah. The three east of the Jordan were Bezer in the territory of Reuben, Ramoth in Gilead, further in the north, and Golan in Bashan, in the territory of the half tribe of Manasseh. For the needs of the people of Judah the two sacred cities of Jerusalem and Hebron were probably selected, and possibly a third town further in the west.

The laws regarding the kingship were intended primarily to guard against the evils which had become apparent during the reign of Solo-

mon. They sturdily championed the old democratic principles which from the first had characterized the Hebrew state. They provided a constitution to guide the king in his ruling and to protect the rights of the people. The Hebrew state was thus made a constitutional monarchy. The laws also emphasized strongly that theocratic idea, inherent in all the early Semitic communities, that the Deity was the supreme ruler of the nation, and that the king was simply his earthly representative.

VI. **Humane Regulations.** One of the most marked characteristics of the Deuteronomic laws is their humane spirit. They apply Hosea's law of love to every department of life. Those who toil and those who are helpless, whether men or beasts, are the especial objects of the law-givers' attention. These laws are superbly adapted to the life and condition of the people and represent the beginnings of that philanthropic and social legislation which is gradually transforming and ennobling the character of our modern civilization. They recognize the responsibility of the strong and wealthy and those who rule, not only to the less fortunate but also to the weaker and less efficient members of the community. They proceed on the universal principle that "it is more blessed to give than to receive," and that intelligent, liberal giving is as necessary and helpful to the giver as to the one who receives.

The old custom of punishing the kindred of a criminal as well as the culprit himself, which had been abandoned a few generations before in the reign of Amaziah (§ LXXIII[24]), was formally recognized as unjust and was accordingly annulled by the Deuteronomic law-givers. The justice of not taking as pledge a millstone, which was required in preparing the food for each family, was obvious. The law which enjoins the payment of the wages of a laboring man without delay is as practically applicable to-day as in ancient Israel. So also the law which seeks to secure impartial justice for the resident alien and for all others in the community who could not plead their own cause or had no powerful champion. A delicate consideration characterizes the regulation which commands that a creditor shall not invade the sanctity of the home of a poor debtor in order to secure a pledge. The command not to ask interest of any fellow-Hebrew must be interpreted in the light of the fact that in these early days life in Judah was still very simple. Loans were usually made to those who had suffered misfortune, and were necessary in order to save the borrower from starvation or slavery. Therefore, to demand the exorbitant rate of interest which was usually asked in the East would have been cruel. It was equally disastrous to withhold a

loan from a poor man. Hence the Deuteronomic laws regarding interest are in reality strong and practical exhortations to be generous to the poor and needy.

These laws aim, however, by means of definite, legal regulations, to lift the act above the plane of mere charity and to save the self-respect of the one who borrows, as well as to emphasize the responsibility of those who are able to make the loan.

The same noble consideration appears in the law regarding the gleanings. They are to be left in the field and on the vines and olive trees that the needy may by their own toil share in the common products of the soil. The tithe of the third year was also presented to Jehovah to be held in trust for the wards of the community, the Levites, the resident aliens, the fatherless and the widows. Divested of their local setting and coloring, the principles which underlie these ancient humane regulations anticipate and in certain ways surpass the noblest legislation of the most advanced modern Christian lands.

§ LXXXV. JEREMIAH'S EXPERIENCES AS PATRIOT AND PREACHER UNDER JEHOIAKIM

1. Josiah's fatal attack upon Necho (II K. 23 29. 30)

In the days [of Josiah] Pharaoh-necho king of Egypt went up against the king of Assyria to the River Euphrates. And King Josiah went against him; and Pharaoh-necho slew him at Megiddo, as soon as he confronted him. And his servants carried him in a chariot from Megiddo and brought him to Jerusalem, and buried him in his own sepulchre. And the people of the land took Jehoahaz the son of Josiah and anointed him and made him king in place of his father.

2. Terms imposed by the conqueror Necho (31-35)

Jehoahaz was twenty-three years old when he began to reign and he reigned three months in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Hamutal the daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah. And Pharaoh-necho put him in bonds at Riblah in the land of Hamath, that he might not reign in Jerusalem, and imposed on the land a tribute of a hundred talents of silver and ten talents of gold. And Pharaoh-necho made Eliakim the son of Josiah king in place of Josiah his father and changed his name to Jehoiakim. But he took Jehoahaz away with him, and he came to Egypt and died there. And Jehoiakim gave the silver and the gold to Pharaoh. He

had to tax the land, however, to give the money demanded by Pharaoh: each according to his taxation he exacted the silver and the gold from the people of the land in order to give it to Pharaoh-necho.

Weep not for him who is dead, nor wail for him;
Weep rather for him who is gone, for he shall not return,
And never again shall he see the land of his birth.

3. Jeremiah's references to the fate of Jehoahaz (Jer. 22 10-12)

For thus saith Jehovah, concerning Shallum [Jehoahaz], the son of Josiah, who was king instead of Josiah his father, who went forth from this place: He shall not return thither again, but in the place whither they have led him away captive he shall die, and this land shall not see him again.

4. Jehoiakim's selfish, cruel policy (13-17)

Woe to him who buildeth his house by unrighteousness, and his chambers by injustice;
Who causeth his neighbor to labor without wages, and giveth him not his pay;
Who saith, I will build me a vast palace with spacious chambers;
Provided with deep-cut windows, ceiled with cedar and painted with vermilion.
Dost thou call thyself king because thou excellest in cedar?
Thy father—did he not eat and drink and execute law and justice?
He judged the cause of the poor and needy; then it was well.
Was not this to know me? saith Jehovah.
But thine eyes and heart are bent only on thy dishonest gain,
And on the shedding of innocent blood and on oppression and violence!

5. Jehoiakim's fate (18. 19)

Therefore thus saith Jehovah concerning Jehoiakim, the son of Josiah, king of Judah:

They shall not lament over him, 'O my brother' or 'O my sister'!

They shall not bewail for him, 'O lord,' or 'O his glory'!
He shall be buried as an ass is buried, drawn out and cast forth!

6. Attempt of the men of Anathoth to kill Jeremiah (11 18-20)

Jehovah gave me knowledge of it so that I knew it, then I beheld their deeds.
But I was as a trustful lamb, which they led to the slaughter.
Against me they devised devices: 'Let us destroy the tree with its sap;
And let us cut him off from the land of the living, that his name may no more be remembered.'
But Jehovah, thou righteous judge, who testest the heart and the mind,
I shall see thy vengeance on them, for to thee have I revealed my cause.

7. Their punishment (21-23)

Therefore thus saith Jehovah concerning the men of Anathoth, who seek thy life, saying, Thou shalt not prophesy in the name of Jehovah that thou die not by our hand:

Behold I will visit them in punishment, the young men shall die by the sword,
Their sons and their daughters shall perish by famine,
And there shall be no remnant left to them,
For I will bring evil upon the men of Anathoth, even the year of their visitation.

8. Repentance and just acts the only guarantee of Jehovah's protection (7 1-7)

The word that came to Jeremiah from Jehovah, Stand in the gate of Jehovah's house and proclaim this message: 'Hear the word of Jehovah, all ye of Judah. Thus saith Jehovah the God of Israel: "Amend your ways and your deeds and I will let you dwell in this place; trust not in lying words, thinking, This is the temple of Jehovah. For if ye really amend your ways and your deeds, if ye faithfully execute justice between a man and his neighbor, if ye oppress not the resident alien, the fatherless and the widow, and shed not innocent blood in this place and do not go

after other gods to your hurt; then I will cause you to dwell in this place, in the land that I gave to your fathers, forever and ever.

But now ye are trusting in lying words that cannot profit. Will ye steal, murder and commit adultery, swear falsely and offer sacrifice to Baal, and go after other gods whom ye have not known, and then come and stand before me in this house which is called after my name and say, We are free to do all these abominations? Is this my house, which is called by my name, in your eyes a den of robbers? Behold I, indeed, have seen it," is the oracle of Jehovah. 9. Crimes of the people (8-11)

"Then go now to my sanctuary which is in Shiloh, where I caused my name to dwell at first, and see what I did to it because of the wickedness of my people Israel. And now because ye have done all these deeds, and, although I spoke to you insistently, ye have not heeded, and although I called you, ye have not answered, therefore I will do to the house, which ye call by my name, in which ye trust, and to the place which I gave to you and to your fathers, as I did to Shiloh; and I will cast you out of my sight, as I have cast out your kinsmen, even the entire race of Ephraim. 10. Temple to be destroyed as was the sanctuary at Shiloh (12-16)

This is the nation that hath not hearkened to the voice of Jehovah their God,
Nor received correction; truth hath perished from their mouth.
Cut off thy hair, cast it away, and raise on the bare heights the cry of lamentation,
For Jehovah hath rejected and cast off the generation of his wrath;
For the people of Judah have done evil in mine eyes, is Jehovah's oracle.
They have set their abominations in the house which is called by my name, to defile it.
They have built the high place of Topheth, which is in the valley of Ben-Hinnom,
In order to burn their sons and daughters in the fire, which I never commanded them, nor had it entered my mind. 11. Lament over the corrupt nation (28-31)

12. Terrible fate awaiting it (32-34)

Therefore behold the days are coming," is the oracle of Jehovah,
" When one shall no longer say, The high place of Topheth nor the valley of Ben-Hinnom
But the Valley of Slaughter; for they shall bury in Topheth until there is no place left.
Then shall the dead bodies of this people be food,
For the birds of the heavens and the beasts of the earth; and none shall frighten them away.
Then when I cause to cease from the cities of Judah and the streets of Jerusalem the sound of mirth and of rejoicing,
The voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride; for the whole land shall become a waste." '

13. Popular movement to put Jeremiah to death (26 8-9)

And then when Jeremiah had finished speaking all that Jehovah had commanded him to speak to all the people, the priests and prophets and all the people took hold of him, saying, You must die. Why have you prophesied in the name of Jehovah, saying, ' This temple shall be like Shiloh, and this city shall be desolate, without habitation'? And all the people were gathered about Jeremiah in the temple of Jehovah.

14. His response to the public arraignment (10-15)

And when the princes of Judah heard these things, they came up from the king's palace to the temple of Jehovah; and they sat at the entrance of the new gate of the temple of Jehovah. Then the priests and the prophets spoke to the princes and to all the people, saying, This man is guilty of a capital offence, for he has prophesied against this city as you have heard with your own ears. Then Jeremiah addressed the princes and all the people, saying, It was Jehovah who sent me to prophesy against this temple, and against this city all the words that you have heard. Now therefore reform your ways and your acts, and obey the voice of Jehovah your God; and Jehovah will repent of the evil that he has pronounced against you. But as for me, see, I am in your hand; do with me as appears to you to be good and right. Only be assured that, if you put me to death, you will bring innocent blood upon yourselves and upon this city and upon its inhabitants, for verily

Jehovah hath sent me to you to speak all these things in your ears.

15. Citation of the precedent established by the prophet Micah (16-19)

Then the princes and all the people said to the priests and to the prophets, This man is not guilty of a capital offence, for he has spoken to us in the name of Jehovah our God. Thereupon certain of the elders of the land arose and spoke to all the assembly of the people, saying, Micah the Morashtite prophesied in the days of Hezekiah king of Judah; and he spoke to all the people of Judah, saying, 'Thus saith Jehovah of hosts:

> "Zion shall be plowed as a field,
> And Jerusalem shall become heaps of ruins,
> And the temple-mount wooded heights."'

Did Hezekiah and all Judah indeed put him to death? Did they not fear Jehovah and appease Jehovah, so that Jehovah repented of the evil which he had pronounced against them? But we are on the point of doing great injury to ourselves.

16. Fate of Uriah (20-24)

Now there was also a man who prophesied in the name of Jehovah, Uriah the son of Shemaiah of Kiriath-jearim; and he prophesied against this city and against this land in the same terms as did Jeremiah. And when Jehoiakim the king and all the princes heard his words, the king sought to put him to death; but when Uriah heard it he was afraid and fled and went to Egypt. And Jehoiakim the king sent men to Egypt. And they brought Uriah from Egypt, and took him to Jehoiakim the king, and he slew him with the sword and cast his dead body into the graves of the common people. But the influence of Ahikam the son of Shaphan was in favor of Jeremiah that they should not give him into the hands of the people to put him to death.

17. Symbol of the broken bottle (19 1. 10. 11a. 12a)

Then Jehovah said to me, Go and buy a bottle made of clay, and take certain of the elders of the people and of the priests and go out by the gate of the potsherds. And thou shalt break the bottle in the sight of the men who are with thee, and thou shalt say to them,' Thus saith Jehovah: "Even so will I break this people and this city, as one breaks an

earthen vessel so that it cannot be made whole again, so I will do to this place and to its inhabitants," is the oracle of Jehovah.'

18. Application to the nation (14. 15)

Then Jeremiah came from Topheth, whither Jehovah had sent him to prophesy, and he stood in the court of the temple of Jehovah and said to all the people, Thus saith Jehovah: 'Behold I will bring upon your city and upon all its villages all the evil which I have pronounced against it, because they have defiantly refused to hear my words.'

19. Jeremiah in the stocks (20 1. 2)

Now when Pashhur, the son of Immer the priest, who was chief officer in the temple of Jehovah, heard Jeremiah prophesying these things, he smote him and put him in the stocks, which were in the upper gate of Benjamin, in the temple of Jehovah.

20. The fate awaiting Pashhur and all the people of Judah (3-6)

But on the following day Pashhur released Jeremiah from the stocks. Then Jeremiah said to him, Jehovah hath not called thy name Pashhur but Magor [Terror], for thus saith Jehovah: 'Behold I am about to make thee a terror to thyself and to all thy friends; and they shall fall by the sword of their enemy before your very eyes. But thee and all Judah will I give into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he will carry them into captivity and slay them with the sword. Moreover I will give all the riches of this city and all its possessions and all the treasures of the king of Judah into the hands of their enemies, and they shall carry them away to Babylon; and thou and all that dwell in thy house shall go into captivity, and thou shalt die at Babylon and be buried there, together with all thy friends to whom thou hast prophesied falsely.

21. The prophet's bitter lot (7-10)

Thou hast beguiled me, O Jehovah, and I let myself be beguiled; for thou art stronger than I and hast prevailed.
I have become a laughing-stock all the day, every one mocketh me;
For as often as I speak, I am an object of laughter, for I cry, Violence and Spoil!
For the word of Jehovah hath become to me a cause of reproach and derision all the day;
And if I say, I will not think of it nor speak any more in his name,

Then there is in mine heart, as it were, a burning fire shut
up in my bones.
And I am weary of enduring, I cannot longer bear it;
For I hear defaming of many, terror on every side.
Let us rise up against him, [say] all my familiar friends who
watch for my stumbling,
Perhaps he will be beguiled, and we will prevail against him
and take our vengeance upon him.

22. Regret that he was ever born (14-18)

Cursed be the day in which I was born,
Let not the day wherein my mother bore me be blessed.
Cursed be the man who brought joyful tidings to my father,
saying,
A man child is born to thee, making him very glad.
Let that man be as the cities which Jehovah pitilessly over-
threw;
Let him hear a cry of pain in the morning and a war-cry at
noontime,
Because he did not let me die in the womb, so that my
mother should have been my grave and her womb ever
great.
Why came I forth from the womb to see labor and sorrow,
That my days should be consumed with shame?

I. **The Reign of Josiah.** The decade which followed the great reformation of Josiah appears to have been the happiest and most prosperous in all of Judah's stormy history. The just and humane principles contained in the new law-book were practically applied in the life of the nation. The late tradition in Jeremiah 11^{1-8} implies that Jeremiah joined with the king in urging the people to follow faithfully the guidance of the new code.

There is also strong evidence that the energetic king extended the influence, if not the bounds of Judah, so as to include a part, and possibly all of the territory of Samaria. A late tradition states that he destroyed the heathen paraphernalia of the high places in Northern Israel as well as in Judah. At a later period people from Bethel and Shechem came to worship at the site of the ruined temple at Jerusalem (§ XC^{11}). In sermons, which apparently come from this period, Northern Israel, as well as Judah, is the object of Jeremiah's warnings and promises, suggesting that the relations between the people of Judah and the sur-

vivors of the northern kingdom were exceedingly close. Ezekiel also, from the distant exile, a decade or two later, continued to address the Northern Israelites, as well as the people of Judah who survived the first captivity. During the latter part of Josiah's reign it was possible for him to extend his kingdom to the north, for the rule of Assyria was so far relaxed that the states in distant Palestine were left free to establish their independent authority without serious opposition from outside. Hence it would seem that Josiah's reign revived and realized many of the popular hopes suggested by the never-to-be-forgotten glories of the days of David.

II. **The Death of Josiah about 608 B.C.** If Josiah's sphere of influence extended to the plain of Esdraelon, it is easy to understand why he went out to meet Necho, king of Egypt, near Megiddo, on the southwestern side of the great northern plain. Having become master of southern Palestine, Josiah felt himself able and under obligation to combat a strong heathen foe whose avowed object was simply conquest. Also having zealously espoused the cause of Jehovah, he was doubtless confident that Jehovah of hosts would surely grant him a victory, even against the huge army of Necho. In the light of a broader faith it is obvious that his confidence was unwarranted, for it reflected the older and cruder Hebrew belief that Jehovah was the champion simply of Israel.

Jeremiah is significantly silent regarding the incident; but in the minds of the common people, when Josiah fell mortally wounded at the hands of the Egyptian mercenaries, Jehovah's power or willingness to deliver his people was seriously questioned. They interpreted the signal calamity, which overtook the reformer king, as a divine rebuke for his sweeping innovations; but they did not forget his noble character. Jeremiah refers to the prolonged national lamentation for the dead king. The memory of the high-minded and impulsive Josiah was treasured by later generations, and his spirit and just reign apparently became the prototype of later predictions concerning the righteous ruler who should reign justly and bring glory and deliverance to his people (*e.g.*, Is. 9^{1-7}, 11).

III. **Necho's Asiatic Campaign.** After the death of Josiah in 608 B.C., the prophetic party succeeded in placing on the throne of Judah, Shallum, who assumed on his succession the name Jehoahaz; but his reign lasted only three months. Necho, the son of Psamtik I who had established the rule of the Libyian dynasty over the land of the Nile, inherited from the earlier kings of Egypt a strong ambition for Asiatic conquest. Assyria's weakness at this time promised him a favorable opportunity to satisfy his ambition. Enlisting in his ranks many

foreign soldiers, among whom were well-trained Greeks, he set out on a victorious campaign through Syria. Without difficulty he conquered and held the eastern Mediterranean coastlands, until, in 605 B.C., he found himself confronted by the conquerors and heirs of the old Assyrian empire, the Medes and the Chaldeans.

IV. **The Accession of Jehoiakim.** In the years intervening between 608 and 605 B.C., therefore, Necho ruled over Judah. One of his first acts was to summon the new king Jehoahaz to Hamath, in northern Syria, and to put him in chains. This act was clearly a blow at the prophetic party, which, under Josiah, had resisted his advance. Judah was forced to pay a heavy tribute, and Eliakim, another son of Josiah, under the royal name, Jehoiakim, was placed on the throne. He was clearly chosen by Necho and the popular party in Judah because his character was weak and because he was ready to reverse the policy of his father Josiah.

Jeremiah's arraignment of Jehoiakim reveals a selfish, splendor-loving ruler, regardless of his responsibility to his subjects and of the noble principles laid down in Josiah's law-book. Although he was soon obliged to extract a heavy tribute from his subjects to satisfy the demands of Necho, he went on building for himself a great palace by the forced labor of his subjects. With the prophets and their noble religious and ethical demands he had no sympathy. As a statesman, he proved, at an exceedingly critical period of Judah's history, utterly incapable. As a result, Judah quickly lost both moral and political strength and most of the prestige gained during Josiah's strong reign.

V. **Jeremiah's Experience at the Hands of his Fellow-Townsmen.** Few, if any, of Jeremiah's recorded sermons, come from the latter part of the reign of Josiah; but the evils and perils of Jehoiakim's rule aroused the prophet to renewed activity. He realized to his bitter regret that Josiah's reformation had not taken a fundamental hold on the hearts of the people. The local shrines and sanctuaries were restored, and the abominable Canaanite practices were revived. Their action was the more culpable because they were acting in defiance of the earnest teachings of their enlightened prophets and the plain directions of the new law-book, and the established traditions of more than a decade. Jeremiah's voice was raised in strong and constant protest against the prevailing current in Judah, with the result that he became exceedingly unpopular. The hatred against him was so strong that even his fellow-townsmen at Anathoth conspired to take his life. Jeremiah's feelings are revealed in the prayer which he uttered on this occasion.

Frequently during this distressing period Jeremiah appears to have stood at bay, surrounded by a mob of his countrymen clamoring for his blood. He is a tragic and yet a dramatic figure—sensitive as a woman to public opinion and to the attitude of friends and foes, and yet undaunted, persistent, strong in his unswerving faith in Jehovah. He is pre-eminently the praying prophet of the Old Testament, and in prayer he found not only comfort, but that strength and peace which made the sensitive, shrinking priest of Anathoth one of the world's great heroes.

VI. **The Temple Discourse.** One great crisis in Jeremiah's ministry during the days of Jehoiakim is fully recorded. In the temple courts, beside the gate, he preached to the assembled princes a stirring sermon against the prevailing injustice, deceit and immorality. It breathes the same spirit as the noblest enactments of the Deuteronomic code. As the people pointed to the temple and its imposing ritual, Jeremiah declared that because of their crimes the temple should become a ruin, even as did the ancient sanctuary of Shiloh in the later days of the judges. Like the true prophets who had preceded him, he told them that all their ceremonialism was worse than useless and that only contrition and social and individual righteousness would deliver them.

VII. **The Prophet's Impeachment and Trial.** The physical inviolability of the temple had become a fundamental dogma in the popular belief. The immediate effect of Jeremiah's words upon the people was, therefore, to arouse their murderous hate. They regarded his declaration that the sacred temple should be destroyed as nothing less than blasphemy; and, according to the Hebrew law, blasphemy was punishable by death. The popular priests and prophets united with the mob in demanding that the death sentence be forthwith executed. Calmly Jeremiah replied that he was in their hands. They could put him to death if they wished; but the only way in which they could avert the impending doom was to heed and obey his words. His fearless demeanor calmed the people and led them to listen to the counsels of his friends, the nobles who had earlier rallied about Josiah. Their method of reasoning was closely akin to that employed in modern courts. They cited two significant precedents. One was that of Micah, the Morashtite, who publicly predicted, as had Jeremiah, the complete destruction of Jerusalem; but to him Hezekiah and his people gave heed, and the doom was averted. The other was the sadder precedent, the fate of Uriah, of Kiriath-jearim, who uttered a similar prophecy and paid for his courageous act by the loss of his life, at the command of the reign-

ing king Jehoiakim. "We have shed enough of the blood of the prophets," appears to have been the argument of Jeremiah's friends. By their personal influence, as well as by their clear reasoning, they saved his life; but the incident shows clearly what it cost to be a true patriot and prophet at this period in Judah's history.

VIII. **Jeremiah's Public Imprisonment.** From the same period apparently comes the dramatic account of Jeremiah's conducting the national leaders and priests into the valley of Hinnom and there breaking an earthen bottle before them as a symbol of the catastrophe that impended. Pashhur, one of the temple priests, incensed by Jeremiah's warnings, struck the prophet and then put him in the public stocks and left him exposed to the malignant gaze of the multitude going in and out of the gate which led to the temple court. Jeremiah's words, probably uttered in connection with this incident, reveal the very depths of his soul. They are titanic in their strength and intensity. They echo Jeremiah's grim, uncompromising message of doom and the taunts and threats and murderous cries of his enemies and former friends. In language—later transcribed almost word for word by the author of the majestic poem of Job—Jeremiah voices the bitterness of his own heart and laments that he had not died even before his birth. These words, coming from the hour of supreme anguish and insult, nevertheless voice Jeremiah's unshaken faith in Jehovah's power and justice. They express the conviction, of which his life-work is an illustration, that having once been called to proclaim the truth regarding his nation, it was impossible for him to remain silent, though it cost him his friendships, his reputation, his happiness and even his life. His words are the passionate outburst of a martyr of flesh and blood, with tense and quivering nerves, who chose, nevertheless, through the long years to remain at the stake, simply because he recognized that that was the place where duty called.

§ LXXXVI. THE FIRST AND SECOND COLLECTIONS OF JEREMIAH'S SERMONS

1. Command to record his earlier prophecies (Jer. 36 1-3)

Now in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah, the following message came to Jeremiah from Jehovah, Take a book-roll and write on it all the words that I have spoken to thee regarding Jerusalem and Judah and all the nations, since the day I spoke to thee, from the time of Josiah, even to this day. Perhaps the house of

Judah will give heed to all the evil which I purpose to do to them, so that they will turn each from his evil way, that I may forgive their iniquity and their sin.

2. His command to Baruch to read them before the people (1-8)

Then Jeremiah called Baruch the son of Neriah; and Baruch wrote at the dictation of Jeremiah all the words of Jehovah, which he had spoken to him, upon a roll of a book. And Jeremiah commanded Baruch, saying, I am prevented, I cannot go to the temple of Jehovah. Therefore you go and read in the roll, which you have written at my dictation, the words of Jehovah in the hearing of the people in Jehovah's house upon the fast-day. And also you shall read them in the hearing of all the people of Judah who have come from their cities. Perhaps they will present their supplication before Jehovah and will turn each from his evil course; for great is the anger and the wrath that Jehovah has pronounced against this people. And Baruch the son of Neriah did just as Jeremiah the prophet commanded him, reading out of the book the word of Jehovah in the temple of Jehovah.

3. The public reading (9-10)

Now in the fifth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah, in the ninth month, all the people in Jerusalem and all the people who came from the cities of Judah to Jerusalem proclaimed a fast before Jehovah. Then Baruch read in the hearing of all the people out of the book the words of Jeremiah in the temple of Jehovah in the chamber of Gemariah the son of Shaphan, the chancellor in the upper court at the entry of the new gate of Jehovah's house.

4. The reading before the nobles in the palace (11-19)

And when Micaiah the son of Gemariah, the son of Shaphan, had heard all the words of Jehovah out of the book, he went down into the royal palace to the chancellor's chamber and there were sitting all the princes, Elishama the chancellor, and Delaiah the son of Shemaiah, Elnathan the son of Achbor, Gemariah the son of Shaphan, Zedekiah the son of Hananiah, and all the princes. Then Micaiah made known all the words that he had heard, when Baruch read the book in the hearing of the people. Then all the princes sent Jehudi the son of Nethaniah, the son of Shelemiah, the son of Cushi, to Baruch, saying, Take in your hand the roll from which you have read in the hearing of all the people, and come here. So Baruch the son of Neriah took the roll in

his hand, and came to them. Then they said to him, Sit down now and read it in our hearing. So Baruch read it in their hearing. But when they had heard all the words, they turned in alarm to one another, and said to Baruch, We must surely tell the king of all these words. And they asked Baruch, saying, Tell us now, 'How did you write all these words?' Then Baruch answered them, Jeremiah dictated all these words to me and I wrote them with ink in the book. Then the princes said to Baruch, Go, hide yourself, you and Jeremiah, and let no man know where you are.

5. The king's contempt for the prophecies and the prophet (20-26)

But they went in to the king in his apartment, after they had laid up the roll in the chamber of Elishama the chancellor, and they told all these words in the hearing of the king. Then the king sent Jehudi to bring the roll, and he brought it out of the chamber of Elishama the chancellor. And Jehudi read it in the hearing of the king and of all the princes who stood beside the king. Now the king was sitting in the winter house with a heated brazier burning before him. And when Jehudi had read three or four double columns, the king cut it with a paperknife, and threw it into the fire that was on the brazier, until the entire roll was consumed in the fire that was on the brazier. But they were not alarmed nor tore their garments—neither the king nor any of his servants who heard all these words. Moreover, although Elnathan and Delaiah and Gemariah besought the king not to burn the roll, he would not hear them. Then the king commanded Jerahmeel the king's son and Seraiah the son of Azriel and Shelemiah the son of Abdeel to seize Baruch the scribe and Jeremiah the prophet, but Jehovah kept them concealed.

6. The new command (27, 28)

Then after the king had burned the roll, that is, all the words which Baruch wrote at the dictation of Jeremiah, the word of Jehovah came to Jeremiah as follows, Take again another roll and write in it all the words that were in the first roll, which Jehoiakim the king of Judah burned.

7. Prophecy of destruction (29-31)

And concerning Jehoiakim king of Judah thou shalt say, 'Thus saith Jehovah, "Thou hast burned this roll saying: Why hast thou thus written therein: The king of Babylon shall assuredly come and destroy this land and shall re-

move from there man and beast?" Therefore thus saith Jehovah concerning Jehoiakim king of Judah, "He shall have none left to sit upon the throne of David and his dead body shall be exposed to the heat by day and to the frost by night. And I will visit upon him and his descendants and his servants their iniquity, and I will bring upon them and the inhabitants of Jerusalem and the men of Judah, all the evil that I have pronounced against them, but which they heeded not." '

8. The new roll (32)

Then Jeremiah took another roll and gave it to Baruch the scribe the son of Neriah, who wrote on it at the dictation of Jeremiah all the words of the book which Jehoiakim king of Judah had burned in the fire. And there were also added to them many other similar words.

I. **The Reasons which Led Jeremiah to Write.** The news of the defeat of Necho, in 605-4 B.C., and the rumors regarding the advance of the Chaldeans undoubtedly stirred Jeremiah to redoubled activity. At the same time fear of the new foe had rendered the court and people especially resentful of any prediction of national disaster. The public persecution to which Jeremiah had been subjected had clearly demonstrated that it was no longer safe for him to speak in public. Therefore, like Amos and many prophets before him, when silenced, he resorted to writing. Jeremiah was one of the great prophetic souls who walked so close to God that he recognized in every conviction which came to him the promptings of the divine voice. Accordingly, as a God-given task, he set to work to put in written form the sermons which he had uttered during the past two decades. His object was to appeal directly to the consciences of the rulers and people. Doubtless he also aimed to establish in their minds his authority as a true prophet by showing how his earlier predictions had been realized in the life of the nation.

II. **The Method of Writing.** This narrative from the life of Jeremiah (chap. 36) is of great value because it is one of the few passages which throw direct light upon the way in which the Old Testament writings came into existence and were preserved. As in the East today when a man wishes to write a letter, he resorts to a scribe, so Jeremiah dictated his sermons to his faithful disciple Baruch. The material on which Baruch wrote was probably a parchment, and the instrument which he used a pen dipped in ink. As the subsequent narrative

indicates, at first but one copy was made. It requires little imagination to picture the scene. In some quiet corner of Jerusalem or Anathoth sat Jeremiah, now in the prime of life, but old in experience, recalling his words, uttered at earlier crises. Before him, with pen and parchment in hand, sat his devoted friend and disciple, eagerly writing down his words and perhaps assisting in that revision which has left these earlier sermons of Jeremiah the most finished poems of the Old Testament.

III. **Contents of the First Edition of Jeremiah's Sermons.** It is nowhere distinctly stated that the present book of Jeremiah contains any of the material incorporated in the roll entrusted to Baruch. It is exceedingly probable, however, that this roll constituted the nucleus of our present book of Jeremiah. The fact that the roll was read three times during the same day and its contents recounted in detail to his associates by Micaiah the son of Shaphan, indicates that it must have been short. Since it represented sermons delivered in some cases twenty-two years earlier, it is improbable that they were reproduced verbatim. Rather it would seem that Jeremiah, like most of the earlier prophets when they began to commit their sermons to writing, reproduced the more significant and familiar passages which, through frequent repetition and meditation, had been fixed in his mind. Their exquisite poetic form would thus be in part the result of their frequent repetition, as well as of careful editing.

The reactionary reign of Jehoiakim and the approaching advance of the Chaldeans from the north presented a situation very similar to that in the earlier days of Josiah's reign, when Jeremiah uttered his initial reform sermons with their ominous references to the foe from the north. The abstracts from these earlier sermons, now found in chapters 2–6, and Jeremiah's kindred sermons from the early days of Jehoiakim's reign, found in chapters 7–9, probably constituted the first collection of his prophecies.

Later editors have supplemented them at many points and added the appendix found in $9^{23\text{-}26}$. The reference in the present section (^{7}) also indicates that Jeremiah applied these earlier prophecies to the new situation by adding the prediction, "The king of Babylon shall assuredly come and destroy this land and shall remove from there man and beast."

IV. **The Second Edition of Jeremiah's Prophecies.** The reception of the first edition of Jeremiah's prophecies by people and princes and king is graphically recorded. The princes, who were contempo-

raries of Jeremiah and who had participated in Josiah's reformation, felt strongly the force of Jeremiah's appeal and hoped that it might influence even King Jehoiakim himself. Their advice, however, to Jeremiah and Baruch to hide themselves was well given. The attitude of Jehoiakim was that of supreme contempt and defiance. Before the reading of the roll was completed he cut it in shreds and threw it on the open brazier filled with hot coals by which his palace chamber was heated.

Fortunately Jeremiah was not daunted by this act; but, with that superb persistency which characterizes all his prophetic work, he proceeded at once to reproduce the destroyed roll. It is significantly stated that in this second edition he "added many other similar words." The personal insults and persecutions through which he was then passing doubtless influenced him to include in this second edition those passages which record so clearly and dramatically his own personal experiences and feelings. The first chapter of the book, therefore, which tells of his call and also reflects his trying experiences during the intervening two decades, was probably among the words thus added.

Similar additions are found in 11^{18}–12^{6}, $15^{15\text{-}21}$, $17^{14\text{-}18}$. In the same collection may also well have been included the contemporary sermons found in the original passages of chapters 13–17. Possibly certain of the brief sermons addressed to the rulers, now preserved in the little collection in chapters 21–24, also found a place in this second edition of 604 B.C. In these chapters are found almost all the direct addresses whose literary character and contents point to Jeremiah as the author. There is no evidence in the book of Jeremiah that the prophet himself at a later time made a further collection of his addresses. Throughout the remainder of his ministry he seems to have trusted to the spoken word to convey his messages and to have left the recording of his words to later disciples and to popular tradition.

V. **The Structure of the Book of Jeremiah.** The book of Jeremiah is the longest and most complex of all the Old Testament prophetic books. An attempt has been made in the opening chapters to arrange the subject-matter in chronological order; but this arrangement does not extend beyond the limits represented by the second edition of the prophecies. Throughout the rest of the book the material is loosely grouped according to theme.

Nine general divisions of the book may be distinguished. (1) Chapters 1–17, consisting of reform sermons setting forth Judah's guilt and the approaching judgment. These are interspersed with the proph-

et's personal prayers and complaints because of the rejection of his message and accounts of the persecution which he suffered at the hands of his countrymen. (2) Chapters 18–20, which tell of Jeremiah's symbolic preaching and the resulting persecution during the days of Jehoiakim. (3) A little collection of direct prophecies, chapters 21–24, dealing with the mistakes and crimes of Judah's rulers. The arrangement is not chronological, and the different sections are apparently drawn from originally independent sources. (4) A group of foreign prophecies, now found in chapters 46–51, but introduced by chapter 25, which predicts the conquest of Judah by the Chaldeans. In the Greek version chapters 46–51 are introduced in what was probably their original position after the fourteenth verse of chapter 25. (5) Chapters 26–29, which record Jeremiah's experiences as a prophet and his relations to the false prophets and his predictions regarding them. (6) A small group of messianic prophecies, chapters 30–33, which perhaps once formed the conclusion to an exilic or post-exilic edition of Jeremiah's book. (7) Chapters 34^{1}–40^{6}: another collection of biographical narratives in which the chronological order of events is entirely disregarded. (8) Chapters 40^{7}–44^{14}, which tell of Jeremiah's experiences with the survivors of the second captivity and among the exiles in Egypt. To this has been added the brief chapter 45, which contains an oracle regarding Baruch who figures prominently in the incidents recorded in the accompanying section. (9) Chapter 52 is an historical appendix, based in part upon II Kings 25, and recounting in detail the final destruction of Jerusalem.

VI. **History of the Book of Jeremiah.** It is evident that an exceedingly long and complex history lies back of the book of Jeremiah. A score or more later editors have each contributed their part to the final work. Their activity is a significant testimonial to the greatness of the personality and influence of the noble prophet whose name it bears. It is also a most instructive illustration of the way in which the majority of the Old Testament books gradually grew. Jeremiah devoted himself wholly to the needs and problems of his own day. Written prophecy, as has been shown, was only one of the ways in which he sought to make his message effective at a certain great crisis in his life. The preservation of his later sermons was apparently to him a matter of little concern.

In time the Babylonian exile vindicated Jeremiah's grim messages of doom and gave to his words a commanding authority. The earnest sermons, which his contemporaries had greeted with jeers and persecution and then had lightly forgotten, were at last appreciated as a true message from God to the nation. Hence, when it was almost too late,

every possible effort was made to recall the words and deeds of the great prophet. Traditions derived from many different sources were carefully collected and joined together. Popular imagination in some cases doubtless supplied details, where exact data were lacking. In a few instances (as, for example, the temple discourse in 7^1–8^3) the original sermon and the popular tradition regarding it (26) have both been preserved, so that it is possible to compare Jeremiah's own record with that of later tradition. Unfortunately, regarding the majority of Jeremiah's sermons only the popular traditions have survived. Many of these narratives, however, are so full of detail and in such perfect harmony with the conditions of the age, that they may, with reasonable confidence, be attributed to Jeremiah's faithful scribe, Baruch, who was a companion as well as a servant, followed his master not only through the troublesome reigns of Jehoiakim and Zedekiah, but even into exile in Egypt.

The probable history of chapters 1–17 has already been traced. The chapters which follow are introduced by many recurring formulas, as, for example, 18^1, 21^1, 25^1, 26^1, 27^1, 30^1, 32^1, 34^1, 34^8, 35^1, 36^1, 37^6, 40^1, 44^1, 45^1. In certain chapters also, as, for example, 27–29, the spelling of many proper names, Jeremiah, Jeconiah, Zedekiah and Nebuchadrezzar, is different from that employed throughout the rest of the book. This evidence and the lack of chronological arrangement and frequent duplications all indicate that the second part of the book of Jeremiah is made up of collections. The wide variations between the Hebrew and Greek versions of Jeremiah in the order and contents of the different chapters indicate that as late as the second century before Christ different recensions of the book were current. In many cases the briefer and clearer Greek text (which has usually been adopted) evidently represents the older and the more nearly original version.

Many very late additions are also found scattered throughout this great compilation of Jeremian literature. It is probable that by the close of the Babylonian exile the majority of the addresses and narratives in the book were to be found in very much their present form; but the process of collecting and revising and editing this voluminous work evidently continued for three or four centuries after the death of the prophet. The resulting book reveals, from many different angles, the life and personality of the noble soul who preached and suffered voluntarily and unflinchingly for his race and God.

§ LXXXVII. EVENTS LEADING TO THE FIRST BABYLONIAN CAPTIVITY

1. Superscription (Jer. 46 1. 2)

The word of Jehovah which came to Jeremiah the prophet concerning the army of Pharaoh-necho king of Egypt, which was by the river Euphrates, in Carchemish, which Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon defeated in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, the son of Josiah, king of Judah:

2. Summons to battle (3. 4)

Set in line the buckler and shield and draw near to battle!
Harness the horses and mount, ye riders, and take your stand with your helmets!
Polish the lances, put on the coats of mail!

3. Flight of Egypt's warriors (5. 6)

Why are they terrified and turning backward?
They flee in wild flight and look not back: terror on every side!
The swift cannot flee away nor the mighty warrior escape!
Northward beside the river Euphrates they have stumbled and fallen!

4. Egypt's vain boasts of conquest (7-9)

Who is this that riseth up like the Nile, whose waters toss themselves like the streams?
And he saith, I will rise up, I will cover the earth, I will destroy its inhabitants!
Go up ye horses and rage ye chariots, let the mighty warriors go forth:
Cush and Put, armed with shields, and the Ludim who bend the bow!

5. Jehovah's judgment on Egypt (10)

But that day is Jehovah's day of vengeance, that he may avenge himself on his adversaries;
And the sword shall devour to satiety and shall drink its fill of their blood,
For Jehovah hath a sacrifice in the north-land, beside the River Euphrates.

6. Egypt's overthrow final (11. 12)

Go up to Gilead and take balm, O virgin daughter of Egypt!
In vain hast thou employed many medicines; there is no healing for thee!
Nations have heard thy wail, and the earth is full of thy outcry,
For hero hath stumbled against hero, they are fallen both of them together.

7. The problem in Judah (Hab. 1 1-2)

The oracle which Habakkuk the prophet beheld:

How long, O Jehovah, have I cried out and thou hearest not!
I cry to thee, Violence, but thou helpest not.
Why dost thou make me look upon wickedness and behold trouble?
Destruction and violence are before mine eyes, and strife and contention.

8. Reign of lawlessness (4)

Therefore law is relaxed,
And justice is never rendered;
For the wicked encompass the righteous,
So that justice is perverted.

9. Jehovah's strange silence (12a. 13)

Art thou not of old,
O Jehovah, my holy One,
With eyes too pure to behold evil?
And thou canst not gaze upon trouble.
Why dost thou gaze upon those who deal treacherously?
Art silent when the wicked swallows him that is more righteous than he?

10. The prophet's waiting attitude (2 1. 2)

Upon my watch tower will I stand,
And take my place at my station,
And I will watch to see what he will say to me;
And what he will answer to my plea.

Then Jehovah answered me and said:
Write down the vision and make it plain upon tablets,
That he may run who reads it.
For the vision is still for times yet to be appointed;
Yea, it hastens to fulfilment and shall not fail;
Though it linger, wait for it;
For it shall surely come, it will not tarry.
Behold the wicked—his soul fainteth within him,
But the righteous—he liveth by his faithfulness.

11. The answer: time will prove that the righteous alone survive (3. 4)

Look around ye that deal treacherously, look well,
Shudder and be shocked.
For I am about to do a work in your days—
Ye shall not believe it when it is told.
For behold I am about to raise up the Chaldeans,
A nation grim and quick of action;
Who go through the whole breadth of the earth
To possess dwelling places not their own.
Awful and terrible are they,
From them judgment goeth forth.
Their horses are swifter than leopards,
And their riders quicker than the wolves of evening.
From afar they come swooping down,
Like the eagle which hastens to devour.
They all come to do violence,
The direction of their faces is straight ahead,
And they gather up captives like sand.
At kings they scoff
And princes are sport to them.
They laugh at every fortress,
And heap up dust and take it.
Then their spirit changes, and they pass by,
And they make their strength their god.

12. The Chaldeans are Jehovah's agents of judgment (1 5-11)

O Jehovah thou hast appointed them for judgment,
And thou, O Rock, hast established them for correction;
For they make men like fish of the sea,
Like worms which have no ruler.
They gather up all in their net,

13. Their irresistible advance (12b. 14-16)

And catch them in their drag-net;
Therefore they sacrifice to their net,
And burn offerings to their drag-net;
For by them is their portion fat,
And their food is rich.

14. Jeremiah's message to Judah (Jer. 25 1. 3 5. 7a)

The word that came to Jeremiah concerning all the people of Judah, in the fourth year of Jehoiakim son of Josiah king of Judah (the same was the first year of Nebuchadrezzar, king of Babylon): From the thirteenth year of Josiah, son of Amon king of Judah, even to this day, now twenty-three years, I have spoken to you faithfully and earnestly and have said, 'Turn each from his evil way and from your evil deeds, that ye may dwell in the land which Jehovah hath given to you and your fathers, from of old and even from evermore.' But ye have not heeded.

15. The divine judgment by the Chaldeans (8-10)

Therefore Jehovah saith, 'Because ye have not heeded my words I am about to send and take a race from the north and bring them against this land and its inhabitants, and all the people round about; and I will utterly destroy them and make them an object of horror and hissing and a perpetual reproach, and I will cause to disappear from their midst the sound of mirth and gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the bride, the sound of the hand-mills and the light of the lamp.'

16. Conquest of Judah (II K. 23 36, 24 1a. 7)

Jehoiakim was twenty-five years old when he became king and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Zebidah the daughter of Pedaiah of Rumah. In his days Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon came up, and Jehoiakim became subject to him for three years. And the king of Egypt came no more out of his land; for the king of Babylon had taken, from the Brook of Egypt to the River Euphrates, all that had belonged to the king of Egypt.

17. Jehoiakim's later rebellion (1b. 2)

Then Jehoiakim again rebelled against Nebuchadrezzar. And Jehovah sent against him guerilla bands of the Chaldeans, of the Arameans, of the Moabites, and of the Ammonites; these he sent against Judah to destroy it, according

to the word of Jehovah, which he had spoken by his servants the prophets.

18. The Rechabites (Jer. 35 1. 2)

This word came to Jeremiah from Jehovah in the days of Jehoiakim king of Judah: Go to the house of the Rechabites and bring them into the temple, into one of the chambers, and give them wine to drink.

19. Testing the Rechabites (3-5)

Then I took Jazaniah, the son of Jeremiah, the son of Habazziniah, and his kinsmen and his son and all the Rechabites and brought them into the temple of Jehovah into the chamber of the sons of Johanan the son of Hananias the son of Gedaliah the man of God, which is by the chamber of the princes, above the chamber of Maaseiah the son of Shallum, the keeper of the threshold; and I set before them bowls of wine and cups and said: 'Drink wine.'

20. Their reply (6. 7. 10b. 11)

But they answered: 'We drink no wine.' For Jonadab our father commanded us: 'Ye shall never drink wine, neither ye nor your sons; neither shall ye build a house nor sow seed, nor possess a vineyard; but all your days ye shall dwell in tents, that ye may live long in the land wherein you dwell as aliens.' And we have obediently done just as Jonadab our forefather commanded us. But when Nebuchadrezzar came up against the land, we said: 'Come let us go to Jerusalem from before the army of the Chaldeans and the army of the Arameans.' So we dwell there.

21. Application of the lesson to Judah (12. 13. 16. 17)

Then this word of Jehovah came to me: Thus saith Jehovah, 'Go and say to the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem: "Will ye not learn instruction as to how one should heed my words? For, while the sons of Jonadab the son of Rechab have performed the command of their forefather, this people hath not hearkened to me."' Therefore, thus saith Jehovah: 'Behold I am about to bring upon Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem all the evil that I have pronounced against them.'

22. Promise to the Rechabites (18. 19)

Therefore thus saith Jehovah: 'Because the descendants of Jonadab the son of Rechab have been obedient and have done as their father commanded them, the descendants of Jonadab the son of Rechab shall never lack a man to serve me as long as the earth stands.'

23. Jehovah's lament over his guilty people, the prey of their foes (12 7-12)

I have forsaken my house, I have cast off my heritage,
I have given over my dearly beloved into the hands of his enemies.
Mine heritage hath become to me as a heritage in the forest;
She hath raised her voice against me, therefore do I hate her.
Is my heritage to me as a speckled bird of prey, so that the birds of prey gather around against her?
Go assemble all the beasts of prey, bring them to devour!
Many shepherds have destroyed my vineyard, they have trampled down mine inheritance under foot,
They have made my beautiful portion a desolate wilderness!
They have made it a desolation, to my sorrow it mourneth desolate;
The whole land is desolate, for no man taketh it to heart.
Upon all the bare heights of the wilderness spoilers have come;
From one end of the land to the other no flesh hath peace.

24. Accession of Jehoiachin (II K. 24 6. 8-10)

Then Jehoiakim slept with his fathers, and Jehoiachin his son became king in his place.

Jehoiachin was eighteen years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem three months. And his mother's name was Nehushta the daughter of Elnathan of Jerusalem. And he did that which displeased Jehovah just as his father had done. At that time the servants of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon came up against Jerusalem, and the city was besieged.

25. Jeremiah's remonstrance (Jer. 13 15-17)

Hear ye and give ear, be not proud, for Jehovah hath spoken!
Give glory to Jehovah your God, before it groweth dark,
Before your feet stumble upon the mountains enveloped in twilight;
And while ye wait for light, ye turn it into blackness and dense darkness.
But if ye will not hear it, I must weep in secret because of your pride.
And mine eyes must shed torrents of tears because Jehovah's flock is taken captive.

Say to the king and to the queen mother, Sit ye down low,
For from the head hath fallen your fair crown.
The cities of the South Country are shut up, and there is none to open;
All of Judah is carried away into exile, with a complete captivity.

26. Lament over coming captivity of king and people (18. 19)

As I live, saith Jehovah, though Coniah [Jehoiachin] the son of Jehoiakim were the signet-ring upon my right hand, I would pluck him thence, and I will give thee into the hand of them that seek thy life, whom thou dreadest, into the hands of the Chaldeans, and I will hurl thee forth and thy mother who bore thee into a land where ye were not born, and there ye shall die. But to the land for which they long they shall not return. Is Coniah despised as a broken vessel and thrown forth into a land which he knoweth not? O land, land, hear the word of Jehovah! Write down this man as childless! For no man of his seed shall prosper, sitting upon the throne of David and ruling any more in Judah.

27. Jeremiah's prediction of Jehoiachin's fate (22 24-30)

Then Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon came to the city, while his servants were besieging it; and Jehoiachin the king of Judah went out to the king of Babylon, together with his mother, and his servants, his princes, and his chamberlains. And the king of Babylon took him captive in the eighth year of his reign. And he carried away from there all the treasures of the house of Jehovah and the treasures of the royal palace and cut in pieces all the vessels of gold which Solomon king of Israel had made in the temple of Jehovah, as Jehovah had said. And he carried away as captives all Jerusalem and all the princes and all the mighty warriors, even ten thousand, and all the craftsmen and the smiths; none remained, except the poorest people of the land. And he carried away Jehoiachin to Babylon; and the king's mother and the king's wives, and his chamberlains, and the chief men of the land, he carried into captivity from Jerusalem to Babylon. And all the men of ability, even seven thousand, and the craftsmen and the smiths a thousand, all of them strong and ready for war; these the king of Babylon took captive to Babylon. And the

28. Capture of Jerusalem and the deportation of Jehoiachin and the ruling classes (II K. 24 11-17)

king of Babylon made Mattaniah, Jehoiachin's uncle, king in his place, and changed his name to Zedekiah.

29. Zedekiah's accession (18)

Zedekiah was twenty-one years old when he began to reign, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem; and his mother's name was Hamutal the daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah.

30. Jeremiah's vision of the two baskets of figs (Jer. 24 1. 2)

After Nebuchadrezzar had carried Jeconiah the son of Jehoiakim king of Judah and the princes and craftsmen and the joiners and the rich men of Jerusalem into exile to Babylon, Jehovah showed me two baskets of figs. One basket had very good figs, like first-ripe figs, and the other basket had very bad figs which could not be eaten they were so bad.

31. Jehovah's question (3)

Then Jehovah said to me, What seest thou Jeremiah, and I answered Figs, the good figs are very good and the bad very bad, so bad that they cannot be eaten.

32. Character and future of the exiles (4-7)

Thereupon this word of Jehovah came to me: Thus saith Jehovah, the God of Israel: 'Like these good figs, so will I regard for good the exiles of Judah whom I have sent out of this place into the land of the Chaldeans; and I will watch over their welfare and will bring them back to this land, so that I will build them up and not pull them down, I will plant them and not pluck them up, and I will give them a heart to know me, that I am Jehovah; and they shall be my people and I will be their God, when they return to me with their whole heart.

33. Of Zedekiah and his subjects (8-10)

But as for the bad figs which are so bad that they cannot be eaten, saith Jehovah, So will I give up Zedekiah king of Judah and his princes and the remnant of Jerusalem that is left in this land and those who dwell in the land of Egypt; and I will make them an object of consternation to all the kingdoms of the earth, and they shall be a reproach and a proverb, a taunt and a curse, in all places whither I shall drive them; and I will send the sword, famine and pestilence among them until they are completely consumed out of the land which I gave to them.'

34. Jeremiah's letter to the exiles (29 1a. 3)

Now these are the words of the letter which Jeremiah of Jerusalem sent to the elders of the exiles, by the hand of Eleasah, the son of Shaphan and Gemariah, the son of Hilkiah, whom Zedekiah king of Judah sent to the king of Babylon:

Thus saith Jehovah the God of Israel to the exiles whom I have carried into exile from Jerusalem: 'Build houses and dwell in them and plant gardens and eat the fruit of them. Take wives and multiply and be not diminished; and seek the welfare of the land whither I have carried you into exile, and pray to Jehovah for it; for in its prosperity rests your own prosperity.'

35. Settle down in Babylon (4-7)

For thus saith Jehovah: 'Let not the prophets who are in your midst nor your diviners deceive you; neither heed their dreams which they dream. For they prophesy falsely in my name; but I have not sent them.'

36. Heed not false prophets (8. 9)

For thus saith Jehovah: 'As soon as seventy years be accomplished for Babylon, I will visit you and fulfil my promises to you, by bringing you back to this place. For I cherish for you thoughts of peace and not of evil, that I may give you a future and a hope. Pray to me and I will hear you; seek me and ye shall find me; if ye seek me with all your heart, I will reveal myself to you.'

37. Promise of final restoration (10-14)

I. **Necho's Defeat at Carchemish.** For about four years the Egyptians, under their conquering king Necho, held undisputed sway over the states along the eastern Mediterranean. Meantime, in the east, momentous changes were taking place. To the northeast of the Tigris a new political power, known in history as the Medean kingdom, was gathering strength. It was made up of the older Aryan invaders and the later Cimmerian hordes which had swept down in repeated waves from southern Europe. At last these various peoples had been united under the rule of one of the older native princes, Cyaxares.

In southern Babylonia a half-nomadic, half-agricultural Semitic race from eastern Arabia had been pressing into the lowlands at the head of the Persian Gulf, and for generations had been a constant menace to both the Assyrian and the old Babylonian empire. These people, who were known as the Chaldeans, had been repeatedly conquered by Assyrian and Babylonian armies, but they still held their ground and waited until the weakness of their rivals would give them an opportunity to seize the coveted lands lying between the lower Euphrates and Tigris rivers. At last, toward the close of the seventh century B.C., when Assyria's power was rapidly declining, there rose a certain local prince, Nabopolassar, who united the Chaldeans, captured the ancient city of Babylon, and thus founded what is known as the new Babylonian empire.

These Chaldean conquerors from the south united with the Medean invaders in the north in conquering Nineveh, the capital of the great Assyrian empire. When Assyria fell in 606 B.C., its territory to the west of the Tigris, in accord with an agreement between the conquerors, was given to the Chaldeans. Owing to the illness of his father, Nabopolassar, the task of subduing this western empire fell to Nebuchadrezzar. Assembling a large army, he marched westward early in 605 B.C. and met the Egyptian king Necho beside the River Euphrates. A decisive battle was fought at Carchemish, the chief city which commanded the commerce between the east and the west. Necho was completely defeated and fled rapidly down through Syria and Palestine, pursued by the Chaldeans.

In the forty-sixth chapter of the prophecy of Jeremiah is found the stirring taunt-song commemorating this battle. Necho, in slaying Josiah and in putting the reactionary Jehoiakim on the throne of Judah, had shown himself a foe of the faithful prophetic party. It was natural, therefore, that men like Jeremiah should rejoice over his overthrow. Egypt through most of its history had proved the evil genius of the Hebrews; hence every event which demonstrated the weakness of this boastful power was significant. The overthrow of Jehoiakim's Egyptian master, before whom he had bowed so slavishly, was also a blow at the evil policy which was rapidly destroying Judah's moral and political strength. In the thought of the faithful, Jehovah's just and good purpose was again beginning to be revealed in human history.

II. **The Prophecy of Habakkuk.** The momentous year, 605 B.C., which witnessed the advent of the Chaldeans on Judah's horizon, appears to be the date of the brief prophecy found in the book of Habakkuk. It deals with a question that often pressed to the front in Israel's troubled history: how could a just God allow the wicked to triumph, while those who faithfully served him were the victims of their unprincipled rulers and fellow-countrymen? Under the reactionary, tyrannical rule of Jehoiakim, this grim problem of evil, in the form in which it is expressed in the book of Habakkuk, was constantly in the minds of the devoted followers of Josiah and of the true prophets (*cf.* Jeremiah's words, § LXXXV[4]). The heathen, unprincipled Egyptians ruled the policies of their little state; while on the throne of Judah sat Jehoiakim, who cared little for justice or the best interests of his people.

The prophet clearly formulates the question, and with undaunted faith waits for the answer. Soon there comes to him the divine assurance that approaching events will disclose the true answer. Indeed,

in his own life and consciousness, he discerns the true solution of the problem of evil: only the righteous man, because he has the sense of doing what is right and of living in harmony with God and the laws of the universe, possesses those essential and eternal qualities which give strength and life.

In the present order of verses it is difficult to distinguish a logical development in the prophet's thought. The simplest explanation is that the passage which describes the advent of the Chaldeans originally stood after the fifth verse of the second chapter. Restored to this position it suggests a further solution to the prophet's problem. The Chaldeans, cruel and arrogant though they are, are not only destined to drive the Egyptians from Palestine, but will also overthrow the rule of injustice and violence within Judah itself. Thus in each event which came to their nation the prophets were quick to recognize the hand of God carrying out his purpose in the life of humanity. In their sublime philosophy, even the heathen conquerors were simply divine agents, doing Jehovah's will in the midst of his people.

III. **The Chaldean Conqueror Nebuchadrezzar.** Jeremiah, even more plainly than his younger contemporary Habakkuk, declared that the Chaldeans were coming to chastise the guilty people of Judah and to transform their hollow mirth into lamentation, if not into true repentance. Within a few weeks the prediction of these prophets was in part realized. Nebuchadrezzar, following with his army closely in the footsteps of the retreating Egyptians, received without delay the homage of all the little states of Palestine. By the close of 605 B.C. he had reached Pelusium, on the borders of Egypt. Just as he was on the point of advancing to the conquest of this ancient rival of Babylon, news came of the death of his father, Nabopolassar. Leaving the battle-field Nebuchadrezzar returned in haste to Babylon to establish himself on the throne. Thus, early in the year 604 B.C., was inaugurated a reign which marks the zenith of Babylon's material splendor and prestige and the downfall and utter desolation of Jerusalem.

For forty-two years Nebuchadrezzar ruled Babylonia and Syria and Palestine with a strong hand. He was undoubtedly the ablest ruler that Babylon had seen since the days of the great Hammurabi. The treaty with the Medes left him free to develop the resources of his empire. There were occasional rebellions in the western provinces; but they were insignificant compared with the great military resources at his command. His inscriptions scarcely mention his campaigns. His ambition was not to conquer new territory, but to make Babylon the strongest and

most magnificent city in all the world. This ambition he fully realized. Huge fortifications were reared at strategic points. Dykes and dams and basins regulated the water supply which was drawn from the two great rivers. Great canals intersected the rich alluvial plains between the Tigris and the Euphrates, making possible the vast system of irrigation which extended out even into the Arabian desert to the west of Babylon. Temples and palaces made the interior of the city the wonder and envy of the whole world.

The various peoples and interests in the great empire were closely consolidated, and the highways of commerce were opened, so that rapid communication was easy, and trade was protected. It is true that the interests of his capital, Babylon, were developed at the expense of other cities of the realm; but all subject peoples who submitted to Nebuchadrezzar's rule and co-operated in carrying out his far-reaching policy received protection and impartial justice at his hand. Those who foolishly ventured to rebel found in him a master, impartial according to his own standard of justice, but harsh and pitiless in his punishment of rebels. In this respect he followed the example of the later Assyrian monarchs. By the severity of the judgment which he meted out, he endeavored to make future rebellions absolutely impossible. In his zeal to develop his capital, Babylon, he also neglected the distant Palestinian provinces, especially those which did not lie along the great arteries of commerce which poured their wealth into the coffers of the mighty mistress of the Euphrates. He left the states of central Palestine almost entirely free to rule themselves, provided they paid their allotted tribute; but when they abused their too great freedom he nearly annihilated them by the heavy blows which he dealt them.

Nebuchadrezzar's inscriptions, however, disclose more than a mere tyrant, ambitious to build up a great capital and empire. A deep religious zeal actuated the mind of this ruler. Although he lived under the shadow of Babylonian polytheism, true piety was certainly in the heart of him who could pray to his god Marduk:

> O eternal ruler! Lord of all being!
> May the king whom thou lovest,
> And whose name thou hast proclaimed,
> Flourish as is pleasing to thee.
> Do thou lead aright his life,
> Guide him in a straight path.
> I am the prince who obeys thee,

The creature of thy hand;
Thou hast created me,
And dominion over all people
Thou hast intrusted to me.
According to thy grace, O Lord,
Which thou bestowest on all people,
Cause me to love thy supreme rule,
And inspire in my heart
The worship of thy god-head,
And grant what seems good to thee,
Because thou hast fashioned my life.

IV. Jehoiakim's Rebellion Against Nebuchadrezzar. In the presence of the victorious Chaldean army, Jehoiakim at first surrendered to Nebuchadrezzar; but within three or four years he rebelled. The reason for this rash act is not suggested in the brief narrative of Kings. Probably it was because Jehoiakim listened to the false promises of the Egyptians. In defying Babylon Judah appears to have stood alone. The rebellion was so insignificant that Nebuchadrezzar at first evidently sought to suppress it simply by directing against Judah the resident Chaldean soldiery and the local Aramean and Moabite and Ammonite auxiliaries. This guerilla warfare was apparently protracted through three or four years.

It was probably during this period that the nomad tribe of the Rechabites were driven from their homes and sought refuge in Jerusalem. Jonadab, one of the important early chieftains of the tribe, figured as a friend and adherent of Jehu in the days of Elijah and Elisha (§ LXV[11]). Through all the years they had remained true to their nomadic instincts and would have nothing to do with the Canaanite agricultural civilization which prevailed in central Israel. Not only did they refrain from building permanent houses and cultivating the soil, but they would not even touch wine, because it is the product of that same agricultural civilization.

Jeremiah, in order to present a powerful and dramatic illustration of their loyalty to the commands of an earlier ancestor, publicly offered them wine. This they resolutely declined. Then, by contrast, the prophet brought out in clear relief the ingratitude and perfidy of the people of Judah, in deliberately disregarding the commands of their Divine Father. As Jeremiah studied the temper of his countrymen, he saw clearly that the immediate future presented no hope of deliverance,

and therefore his sermons of this period are simply lamentations over the guilt of king and people, and over the inevitable fate that impended.

In the hour of deep national humiliation the unworthy Jehoiakim died. His young son, a youth of eighteen, succeeded him on the tottering throne of Judah. About the time of his accession the city was attacked and closely besieged by the soldiers of Nebuchadrezzar. During the three months of Jehoiachin's reign, Jeremiah, as patriot and prophet, could do nothing but predict disaster. Bitter experience had demonstrated that there was little hope that a worthy king and deliverer would spring from the degenerate house of David. Jeremiah therefore stoutly rejected the popular hopes that still centred in the royal line. Instead he fixed his faith for the future in the race which should rise, trained and sanctified by the experiences of the exile.

V. **The First Captivity.** In 597 B.C. Nebuchadrezzar at last came himself with an army and completed the siege of Jerusalem. The futility of further resistance was so obvious that Jehoiachin and his nobles hastened to surrender. The life of the young king was spared and he was carried away as a hostage to Babylon, together with his mother, his wives, and the chief officials of his court and land. Nebuchadrezzar also deported the warriors, the important leaders, and the craftsmen and smiths. His object clearly was to strip the land of all who might again raise the standard of rebellion. Between eight and ten thousand men were thus transported, together with their wives and children, representing in all a total of at least twenty and possibly forty thousand souls (*cf.* § XC[II]). There is no evidence that any Hebrews were put to death at this time. Apparently Jehoiachin's early surrender saved the life of the chief offenders. Nebuchadrezzar was also loath to diminish the numbers of the foreign subjects which he was constantly bringing into the heart of his empire to develop its inexhaustible agricultural resources.

Over the Jews who were left behind the Babylonian king placed one of the Judean royal house, a brother of Jehoiakim, and gave him the name Zedekiah. Jeremiah's comparison of those who were thus left behind with the exiles carried to Babylonia is exceedingly significant. Those who remained with Zedekiah he likens to bad figs, wormy, decayed, practically useless. They were so degenerate that he could predict for them nothing but disaster. In contrast the exiles were like good figs. They were the picked men of the nation. With them went Israel's hope as a people. Over them Jehovah promised to guard, if they would but learn from their trying experience to turn to him with contrition and trust.

To these exiles, settled in distant Babylonia, Jeremiah sent a letter full of hope and encouragement. His advice to them was to cherish no vain expectations of throwing off the yoke of Babylon in the near future; but rather to settle down in Babylon, and to become good citizens of the great empire, recognizing that upon its prosperity depended their present peace and future hope. Jeremiah also promised to the exiles that after a generation or two they would be permitted to return. The prophet expresses this belief in concrete terms, suggesting seventy years of exile. Ezekiel in the same concrete way states that the exile shall last forty years (Ez. 4^6). As a matter of fact, the first group of Jewish exiles was held sixty years and the second group fifty years under the iron rule of Babylon. Neither of the prophets attempted to predict the exact duration of the exile; but both, with that sublime faith which rose triumphant above the calamities of the moment, saw that their race still had a mission to perform in the world, and that the God who had led his people through the great crises of the past would not forsake them, when once they had learned the vital lessons which the exile was intended to teach.

§ LXXXVIII. EZEKIEL'S MESSAGES TO THE PEOPLE OF JUDAH

1. Ezekiel's vision (Ezek. $1^{1.\ 3b}$)

In the thirtieth year, in the fifth day of the fourth month, as I was among the captives by the River Chebar, the heavens were opened and I saw visions of God and the hand of Jehovah was on me there.

2. The divine commission (2^{1-6})

And he said to me, Son of man, stand up on thy feet that I may speak with thee. And the spirit entered into me as he spoke to me and made me stand upon my feet; and I heard him who spoke to me. And he said to me, Son of man, I send thee to the rebellious house of Israel, who have rebelled against me, both they and their fathers, even to this day. It is I who send thee to them that thou shouldst say to them: 'Thus saith Jehovah: "Whether they will hear or refuse to hear—for they are a rebellious house—they shall learn that a prophet is among them."'

3. Words of encouragement (6. 7)

And thou, son of man, fear them not nor be dismayed at their words, though briars and thorns are about thee and thou dwellest among scorpions. Be not afraid of their words nor be dismayed at their looks; for they are a re-

bellious house. But do thou speak my words to them whether they hear or refuse to hear; for they are a rebellious house.

4. Reception of the divine messages (2^{8}–3^{3})

But thou, son of man, hear what I say to thee. Be not rebellious like this rebellious house. Open thy mouth and eat what I give thee. Then I looked and there was stretched out to me a hand in which there was a roll of a book. And he unrolled it before me and it was written within and without; and in it were written lamentations and mourning and woe. And he said to me, Son of man, eat this roll and go speak to the house of Israel. So I opened my mouth and he made me eat the roll. And he said to me, Son of man, eat and be filled with this roll which I give thee. Then I ate it, and it was as sweet as honey in my mouth.

5. Preparing the prophet for his difficult task (3^{4-9})

And he said to me, Son of man, up, go to the house of Israel and speak my words to them. For thou art not sent to a people of strange speech, nor to many peoples whose words thou canst not understand. Verily, if I sent thee to them, they would hear thee! But the house of Israel will not be willing to hear thee, for they are not willing to hear me; for all the house of Israel are bold and unyielding. Behold I make thee as bold and unyielding as they. As adamant, harder than flint, have I made thy face. Be not afraid of them neither be dismayed at them, for they are a rebellious house.

6. Beginning of his work ($^{14, 15}$)

Then the spirit lifted me up and took me away and I went in great excitement, for the hand of Jehovah was strong upon me. Then I came to the captives at Tel-Abib, who dwelt by the canal Chebar, and I sat there overwhelmed among them seven days.

7. His duty as a watchman ($^{16-21}$)

At the end of seven days this word of Jehovah came to me: Son of man, I make thee a watchman to the house of Israel. When thou hearest a word from my mouth, thou shalt warn them from me. When I say to the wicked, 'Thou shalt surely die'; if thou speak not to the wicked to warn him from his wicked way, so as to save his life, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thy hand. But if thou warn a wicked man and he turn not from his wickedness nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity. But thou hast saved thyself.

Again, when a righteous man turns from his righteousness and does wrong, and I lay a stumbling-block before him, he shall die; because thou hast not given him warning he shall die in his sin, for the righteous deeds which he hath done shall not be remembered; but his blood will I require at thy hand. But if thou warn the righteous man not to sin and he doth not sin, the righteous man shall surely live, because he took warning; and thou hast saved thyself.

8. Portrayal of the siege of Jerusalem (4 1-3)

Do thou also, son of man, take a tile, and set it before thee, and portray upon it a city, even Jerusalem; and lay siege against it, and build a siege wall against it, and throw up a mound against it; pitch camps also against it, and plant battering rams about it. And take thou an iron plate, and set it for a wall of iron between thee and the city; and set thy face toward it and it shall be in a state of siege, and thou shalt lay a siege against it; and this is a sign to the house of Israel.

9. The overwhelming disaster awaiting its inhabitants (5 1-4)

And do thou, son of man, take a short sword and use it as a barber's razor, and pass it over thy head and beard. Then take the balances and divide the hair. A third part burn in the fire in the midst of the city, when the days of the siege are complete; and take a third part and smite with the sword round about the city; and a third part scatter to the wind. But take a few of them and wrap them up in thy skirts; and of these again take some and burn them in the fire.

10. The awful but well-deserved fate about to overtake Jerusalem (5-12)

Then thou shalt say to all the house of Israel, 'Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: "This is Jerusalem. I have set her in the midst of the nations and countries round about her. But she hath rebelled against mine ordinances more wickedly than the nations; and against my statutes more than the countries round about her. For they rejected mine ordinances and have not walked in my statutes." Therefore thus saith the Lord Jehovah: "Because ye have been more rebellious than the nations round about you, in that ye have not walked in my statutes nor kept my ordinances; but have done according to the ordinances of the nations that are round about you," therefore thus saith the Lord Jehovah, "behold I also am against thee and will execute

judgment against thee in the sight of the nations. And I will do in thee that which I have not done and the like of which I will not do again, because of all thine abominations. Therefore fathers shall eat their sons in the midst of thee, and the sons shall eat their fathers. And I will execute judgment on thee, and I will scatter the whole remnant of thee to every wind. Therefore, as I live," is the oracle of the Lord Jehovah, " because thou hast defiled my sanctuary with all thy detestable things and with all thine abominations, I will also drive thee away. And mine eye shall not spare and I also will have no pity. A third part of these shall die by the pestilence and perish with famine in the midst of thee, and a third part shall fall by the sword round about thee, and a third part I will scatter to every wind and pursue with the sword." '

11. Jehovah's assurances to the exiles (11 14-17)

This word of Jehovah also came to me, Son of man, thy kinsmen, thy fellow-exiles and all the house of Israel, all of it, of whom the inhabitants of Jerusalem say: ' You are far from Jehovah; to us this land is given as a possession '; therefore, say, ' Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: " True, I have removed them afar off among the nations and scattered them off over the lands; yet will I be their sanctuary for a little while in the countries to which they have gone." ' Therefore say, ' Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: " I will gather them from the peoples and assemble them from the countries whither they have been scattered; and I will give them the land of Israel. And they shall go thither and shall take away all its detestable and abominable things, and I will give them another heart; and I will put a new spirit into them; and I will take the stony heart out of their breast and give them a heart of flesh; that they may follow my statutes and keep mine ordinances to do them; and they shall be my people and I will be their God. But as for these who are devoted to their detestable and abominable things, I will visit the consequences of their deeds upon their own heads." '

12. Command to represent the flight of fugitives (12 1-6)

And this word of Jehovah came to me, Son of man, thou art dwelling in the midst of a rebellious house who have eyes to see, but they see not; ears to hear but they hear not; for they are a rebellious house. And do thou, O son of man, prepare by day in their presence goods for removal;

and remove from thy place to another place in their presence. Perhaps they may perceive, although they are a rebellious house. Bring out thy goods by day in their presence as though for removal, and do thou go forth in the evening in their presence, as one who goes forth into exile. In their presence dig through the wall and go out through it. In their presence take up thy goods upon thy back. Go forth covering thy face, so that thou wilt not see the land; for I have appointed thee as a sign to the house of Israel.

13. The symbolic act (7)

Then I did as I was commanded. I brought out my goods by day, as though they were goods for removal, and in the evening I dug through the wall and before their eyes I went forth in the dark, bearing them on my back.

14. The application (8-13)

And this word of Jehovah came to me in the morning, Son of man, hath not the rebellious house of Israel said to thee, 'What art thou doing?' Say to them, 'Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: "This burden concerns the prince in Jerusalem and all the house of Israel, who are in her midst." Say, 'I am a sign to you. As I have done, so shall it be done to them. They shall go into exile and captivity and the prince who is in their midst shall bear a burden on his back. He shall go forth in the dark. He shall dig through the wall and go out through it with covered face, so that he shall not see the land; and I will cast my net over him and he shall be taken in my snare; and I will bring him to Babylon, the land of the Chaldeans; and he shall not see it, and there shall he die.'

15. Undermining influence of the popular prophets (13 1-7)

Moreover this word of Jehovah came to me, Son of man, prophesy against the prophets of Israel. Prophesy and say to them, 'Hear the word of Jehovah, "Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Woe to the foolish prophets who prophesy according to their own mind and to what they have not seen. Like jackals on the ruins are thy prophets, O Israel. Ye have not gone up into the breaches, nor built up a wall for the house of Israel, that ye may stand up in battle in the day of Jehovah. They see false visions and divine lies, saying, The oracle of Jehovah, when Jehovah hath not sent them. And they await the fulfilment of their

words. Do ye not see a false vision and utter lying divinations?"'

16. The true law of moral responsibility (18 1-4)

This word of Jehovah came to me, What do ye mean by using this proverb in the land of Israel: 'The fathers have eaten sour grapes and the children's teeth are set on edge?' As I live, is the oracle of Jehovah, never again shall ye use this proverb in Israel. Behold all souls are mine—the soul of the father as well as the soul of the son is mine. The soul that sinneth, it alone shall die.

17. Reward of individual virtue (5-9)

But if a man be righteous, doing justice and righteousness, if he eat not upon the mountains nor lift up his eyes to the idols of the house of Israel, nor defile his neighbor's wife, nor approach a woman in her impurity, and wrong no one, restore to the debtor his pledge, take nought by robbery, give his bread to the hungry and clothe the naked, lend not at interest, nor take any increase, keep his hand away from iniquity, execute true judgment between man and man, follow my statutes, keep my commandments to do them, he is righteous; he shall live, is the oracle of Jehovah.

18. Penalty for individual sins (10-13)

But if ye beget a son that is a robber, a shedder of blood, who does none of these things, but eats upon the mountains, defiles his neighbor's wife, wrongs the poor and needy, robs, restores not the pledge to the debtor, lifts up his eyes to idols, commits abomination, lends on interest, and takes increase, shall he live? He shall not live. He hath done all these abominations. He shall die. His blood shall be upon him.

19. Moral guilt not transferred to another (14. 17b 20)

And behold if ye beget a son who sees all the things that his father hath done, and fears and does not do likewise, . . . he shall not die from the iniquity of his father; he shall live. His father, because he practised oppression, committed robbery, and did what was not good among the people, died for his iniquity. But ye say, Why should not the son bear the iniquity of his father? If the son execute justice and righteousness, keep all my statutes to do them, he shall surely live. The person who sins shall die. A son shall not bear his father's iniquity, and a father shall not bear his son's iniquity. The righteousness of the righteous shall be to his credit, and the wickedness of the wicked to his discredit.

If the wicked turn from all his sins which he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, and execute justice and righteousness, he shall surely live; he shall not die. None of the transgressions which he hath committed shall be held against him. Because of the righteousness which he hath done he shall live. Have I any pleasure in the death of the wicked? is Jehovah's oracle. If he turn from his ways shall he not live?

20. Forgiveness for the penitent (21-23)

I. The History and Personality of Ezekiel. Ezekiel, the son of Buzi, was one of the many exiles carried away into captivity in 597 B.C. Five years later, in 592 B.C., he began his work as a prophet. The deference with which he was consulted by the elders of the people and the maturity and wide observation revealed in his earliest sermons favor the conclusion that he was not a young man when he entered upon his new task. If so, he was born and brought up during the brilliant reign of Josiah and received from the great reformer prophets, who rallied about the young king, the early teachings which bore fruit in the prophet's later activity. In all his prophecies he shows himself to have been an ardent disciple of Jeremiah. In their interpretation of the past history of their race, of its present crises, and of its future hopes, these two prophets are in closest agreement, although they differ widely in the way in which they present their teachings.

By birth and youthful training Ezekiel was a priest. He manifests an intimate acquaintance with the temple and its ceremonial institutions. His peculiar literary style and figures and his characteristic teachings represent the blending of the prophet and priest. In Ezekiel these two currents of thought, which had hitherto run on independently, are at last united. He was also well acquainted with the earlier history and literature of his race. His ministry of twenty-two years lay partly in the period preceding the final destruction of Jerusalem and partly in the Babylonian exile itself. He was thus the connecting link between the ethical teachings of the earlier prophets and the ritualism of the priests, between the pre-exilic Hebrew civilization and thought and the very different conditions and ideals introduced by the fall of Jerusalem in 586 B.C.

Ezekiel is one of the most striking and dramatic characters in Israel's history. He was harsh and relentless in his condemnation of the sins of his nation, intense in his zeal for righteousness, and bold and even dogmatic in declaring his convictions. Above all, he was an idealist,

who believed firmly in the ultimate future of his race. Although he was not a poet like the great prophets who preceded him, he employed highly dramatic imagery and symbols in setting forth his teachings. Proverbs, parables, riddles, dirges, visions, developed allegories, and even acted symbols were used by him to secure and hold the attention of his fellow-countrymen. The fact that the dramatic methods are natural and in perfect keeping with the character and spirit of the prophet alone delivers him from the charge of sensationalism. As it is, they but reveal the intense moral earnestness and the deep sense of responsibility with which Ezekiel took up his task.

II. **Ezekiel's Call and Commission.** Ezekiel, like Isaiah and Jeremiah, gives a vivid picture of his call to the prophetic office. It came to him as he dwelt among the Jewish exiles beside the Chebar—the Khabaru Canal which, as we learn from contemporary inscriptions, ran from the great city of Babylon eastward to Nippur. The general form and import of his initial vision were probably suggested by that of Isaiah. The details of the elaborate picture reflect the impressions which the art and religious symbolism of Babylonia and especially the huge colossi, with the bodies of animals, the faces of men, and the wings of birds, standing guard before palace and temple, made upon the mind of the exiled priest.

The account of his visions as well as the other writings of Ezekiel show the fruits of careful elaboration. He who was trained in the precise school of the law did not hesitate to introduce frequent repetitions in order to make his thought impressive and clear. Ezekiel's visions also mark the beginning of that apocalyptic type of literature (in which ideas are represented by concrete symbols), whereby the later prophets sought to render their messages impressive and to arouse the intellectual activity of their hearers.

In his initial vision Ezekiel seemed to behold a great luminous cloud, sweeping from the north, within which were four winged creatures, with faces of men, of lions, of bulls and of eagles. Beside each creature was a revolving wheel, with a wheel cutting it at right angles. These wheels appeared to be alive and were covered with eyes, symbolizing the divine omniscience. On the great arch, transparent as crystal, supported by the four flying creatures, was a throne resembling sapphire. On this throne Ezekiel seemed to see Jehovah seated, in form like a man and radiant as the rainbow.

From the majestic, transcendent divine presence thus revealed to him Ezekiel received his prophetic commission. It was to go forth and

proclaim to his people the message of counsel and warning in the face of opposition and persecution. The divine message is likened to a roll of parchment which the prophet is commanded to eat, indicating that in him the word of God became incarnate. Ezekiel also felt himself called to be a watchman to warn his people of every danger that threatened. His responsibility ceased only when he had exhausted every possible means of impressing his divine message upon them. Thus in Ezekiel the prophet became a pastor—not merely the conscience of the nation but the guide and guardian of individual souls.

III. **Ezekiel's Advice Regarding the Crisis in Judah.** During the five years preceding the fall of Jerusalem, Ezekiel's attention was fixed almost exclusively on the problems which confronted Jeremiah in distant Judah. The first twenty-four chapters of his book represent his activity during this period. Communication was evidently close between the Jewish exiles and their kinsmen in Judah. Ezekiel was well informed of every movement and tendency in the little Judean kingdom. The prophet put forth all his energies to stem the tide of discontent and false hopes that threatened to carry Judah into fatal rebellion against Nebuchadrezzar. Primarily he appealed to the Jewish exiles in Babylon, for their influence was great with their kinsmen in Palestine, and they were all deluding themselves with the belief that in some miraculous way Jehovah would interpose to break the power of the Chaldeans. Ezekiel's sermons were also doubtless sent as tracts to circulate among the Jews left behind in the home-land.

Ezekiel, like Jeremiah, during the same period, met only with opposition and scepticism. Hence, at this crisis, he employed a series of striking symbols. On one occasion he took a tablet of clay and drew a sketch of Jerusalem in a state of active siege. Outside he set up an iron plate as a symbol of the barrier between Jehovah and his people, which prevented him from protecting them or delivering them from the hands of their Chaldean foes.

Again seeking to impress the people, Ezekiel lay on his left side for many days, as if bound and helpless, in token of the one hundred and ninety years of exile in store for the northern kingdom. Later he lay on his right side to represent the forty years during which he predicted the same fate was to overtake Judah. To make vivid the horrors of the siege which threatened Jerusalem, he prepared out of coarse flour unclean food which he baked and ate publicly.

Ezekiel's fourth symbol was equally dramatic. Cutting off the hairs of his head and beard, he divided them into three parts; one part he

burnt with fire, another he smote with the sword, and a third he scattered to the winds, to symbolize the fate of Jerusalem. Only a few of those which were scattered were ultimately preserved to represent the small remnant that should survive the coming siege. These were the purified few who, in the land of exile, should lose their stony hearts and receive a new heart of flesh and be fitted at last to participate in the fulfilment of Jehovah's promises to the race.

In many ways the most striking of all Ezekiel's acted sermons was preached before his own house, beside the wall that encircled the village in which dwelt the Jewish exiles. As the shadows of evening began to gather he dragged out his household possessions, and then dug through the clay wall and carried them forth in the dark, as if fleeing into exile. Having roused the curiosity of his people to the highest pitch, he interpreted to them on the following morning the meaning of his strange action. Even as he had sought to flee by night with his treasured possessions, so, he declared, in the hour of their approaching extremity, the king and princes of Judah would seek, but in vain, to escape from beleagured Jerusalem.

IV. **Causes of Judah's Overthrow.** During the critical days when the question of whether or not Judah would rebel against Nebuchadrezzar hung in the balance, Ezekiel appealed not only to the fears but also to the reason of his hearers. In a series of graphic pictures he reviewed the past moral history of his race. His aim was twofold: (1) to answer the assertions of his fellow exiles that their fate was unjust, and thus to vindicate Jehovah; and (2) to demonstrate the utter folly of expecting that Jehovah would interpose to save the people of Judah in case they defied their Chaldean masters.

With that unflinching severity which characterizes the prophet, he goes back and traces the ignominious, heathen origin of his race. He recalls Jehovah's love and pity in supplying the needs and in training this unpromising foundling, until at last he took her to himself in the close bonds of marriage, and lavished upon her all the blessings that a fond husband could bestow. Infidelity and apostasy, however, had characterized all her later history. Even Samaria and corrupt Sodom were righteous in comparison with ungrateful Judah. Idolatry, foreign alliances, and gross immorality had destroyed Judah's every claim to Jehovah's protecting care. Ezekiel also likens Judah to a filthy, rusty pot which must be thrown into a fiery furnace, that the true metal may be purged of its dross and again recast into a vessel fit for Jehovah's use.

V. **Ezekiel's Doctrine of Individual Responsibility.** Ezekiel's analysis of the character of his nation seems harsh and drastic; and yet it was not a time for flattering words. Judah was full of false prophets who were saying, Peace, when there was no peace. Ezekiel calls them jackals, prowling about the ruins of Jerusalem, undermining its very walls. In the hour when plain-speaking and fundamental reform alone would save the nation, they were like masons daubing over a wall with whitewash, concealing its weakness until, in the hour of extremity, it falls in ruins.

From the corrupt, tottering nation Ezekiel turned to the individual and enunciated in clearest terms the law of individual opportunity and responsibility. He did not deny for a moment the fact that each man suffered for the sins and follies of the state; but he did combat strenuously the popular fallacy that each individual was morally guilty because of the crimes of the community as a whole. In the clearest terms he enunciates the great principle that each man is responsible, in the sight of God, simply for his own acts whether good or bad, and that present, not past, attitude and deeds determine the issues of life. Ezekiel's ultimate message, therefore, in the hour of the nation's overthrow, was a call to individual repentance and the assurance that Jehovah was not only just in his treatment of each individual, but also eager to forgive every soul that truly turned to him for pardon and protection.

§ LXXXIX. JEREMIAH'S ACTIVITY IN THE REIGN OF ZEDEKIAH

1. Judgment coming upon the faithless priests and prophets (**Jer. 23** ^{9b}, c. 11. 12)

Mine heart within me is broken, all my bones relax;
I am become like a drunken man, as a man overcome by wine;
For both prophet and priest are shamefully corrupt.
Even in my temple have I found their wickedness, is the oracle of Jehovah;
Therefore their way shall be to them as slippery places.
Into darkness shall they be thrust along and fall therein;
For I will bring evil upon them, even the time of their visitation.

2. Prophets of Jerusalem worse than were those of Samaria (13-15)

In the prophets of Samaria I saw that which was sickening,
They prophesied by Baal, and led my people Israel astray.
But in the prophets of Jerusalem I have seen a horrible thing;
They commit adultery, they walk in falsehood and strengthen the hands of evil-doers.
They are all of them like Sodom, and its inhabitants like Gomorrah.
Therefore, thus saith Jehovah concerning the prophets:
Behold I will feed them with wormwood and make them drink the water of gall;
For from the prophets of Jerusalem hath profaneness gone forth into all the land.

3. Their false message (17)

They say continually to those who despise the word of Jehovah: 'He shall have peace.'
And if one walk according to the stubbornness of his own heart, they say: 'No evil shall come upon you.'

4. Their repudiation by Jehovah (21. 22)

I have not sent the prophets, yet they ran!
I have not spoken to them, yet they have prophesied!
If they had really stood in my council and heeded my words,
Then would they have turned back my people from their evil deeds.

5. Their folly in thinking they can escape Jehovah (23-27)

Am not I a God near by and not a God far off?
Can a man hide himself in secret places and I not see him?
Do not I fill both heaven and earth?
I have heard what the prophets say,
They who prophesy falsely in my name, saying: 'I have dreamed, I have dreamed;'
How long shall there be a message in the heart of the prophets who prophesy falsehood,
And prophesy the deceit of their own heart, thinking that they can make my people forget my law,
By their dreams which they recount each to his neighbor,
Just as their fathers forgot my name through Baal?

The prophet, who has a dream, let him recount his dream;
And he with whom is my word let him speak my word faithfully.
What hath the straw to do with the wheat? is the oracle of Jehovah.
Is not my word like a fire, like a hammer which breaks in pieces the rocks?

6. Their real duty (28. 29)

In the fourth year [593 B.C.] of Zedekiah king of Judah, in the fifth month, this word came from Jehovah to Jeremiah: Thus saith Jehovah: 'Make thongs and a yoke and put them on thy neck, and send to the kings of Edom, of Moab, of the Ammonites, of Tyre and of Sidon, by the messengers who have come to Jerusalem to Zedekiah king of Judah, and let them give this command to their masters: "Thus saith Jehovah, God of Israel: Thus shall ye say to your masters: I have made the earth by my great power and by mine outstretched arm, and I give it to whom it seemeth right to me. I now have given the earth to Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon my servant and the beasts of the field to serve him; and the people and the kingdom which will not put their neck in the yoke of the king of Babylon will I punish by sword and famine, until I have given them into his hand, is Jehovah's oracle. But ye, hearken ye not to your prophets nor to your diviners nor to your dreamers nor to your soothsayers and sorcerers, who say, Ye shall not serve the king of Babylon! For they prophesy a lie to you, in order to remove you far from your land. But that people which shall bring its neck into the yoke of the king of Babylon and serve him I will leave in their own land, and they shall till it and dwell therein."'

7. The warning to the rebellious kings of Palestine (27 1-11)

And to Zedekiah king of Judah I spake the same words and said, Bring your neck into his yoke and serve the king of Babylon; for these prophets prophesy a lie to you, for I have not sent them, is Jehovah's oracle, and they prophesy in my name falsely, that they might drive you out and that ye might perish, together with the prophets who have prophesied falsely to you.

8. To Zedekiah (12a. 14b. 15)

9. Further captivity, not an immediate restoration (16. 18a. 19a. c. 20a. 22a)

And to the priests and the whole people I said, Thus saith Jehovah: 'Listen not to the words of your prophets who prophesy to you, saying, "Behold the vessels of Jehovah's house shall shortly be brought back from Babylon." For they prophesy a lie to you. But if they be prophets, and if Jehovah's word be really with them, then let them make intercession with me. For thus saith Jehovah: "The other vessels which the king of Babylon did not take with him to Babylon, when he carried away into captivity from Jerusalem Jeconiah king of Judah, shall be brought to Babylon," is Jehovah's oracle.'

10. Hananiah's prediction of restoration (28 1-3a. 4a. c)

Then Hananiah, the son of Azzur, the prophet of Gibeon, said to me in the temple in the presence of the priests and all the people, Thus saith Jehovah: 'I have broken the yoke of the king of Babylon; within two years I will bring back to this place the vessels of Jehovah's house, and Jeconiah and the Jewish exiles; for I have broken the yoke of the king of Babylon.

11. Jeremiah's reply (5-9)

Then Jeremiah said to Hananiah in the presence of the priests and all the people who were standing in the temple: Amen! Even so may Jehovah do. May he fulfil the words that you have prophesied and bring back the vessels of the temple and all the exiles from Babylon to this place! Only hear, I pray, the word that I speak in your ears and in the ears of all the people: The prophets of old, who were before me and before you, prophesied of war against many countries and great kingdoms. If a prophet prophesied peace, then, when the word came to pass, it was known whether Jehovah had truly sent this prophet.

12. Hananiah's symbolic act (10. 11)

Thereupon Hananiah, in the presence of all the people, took the yoke from Jeremiah's neck and broke it; and Hananiah said in the presence of all the people: 'Even so will I break the yoke of the king of Babylon from off the necks of all people.' Then Jeremiah went his way.

13. The iron yoke of Babylon (12-14a)

Now the word of Jehovah came to Jeremiah after Hananiah had broken the yoke from off his neck, saying, Go and say to Hananiah, 'Thus saith Jehovah: "Thou hast broken the yoke of wood, but I will make in its stead one of iron. I have put a yoke of iron upon the neck of all these peoples, that they may serve the king of Babylon."'

Then Jeremiah said to Hananiah, Jehovah hath not sent thee; but thou makest this people to trust in lies. Therefore thus saith Jehovah: Behold I will send thee away from the face of the earth. This very year shalt thou die. And he died in the seventh month.

14. Hananiah's fate (15-17)

And Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon. Then in the ninth year of his reign [588 B.C.], in the tenth day of the tenth month, Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon came, together with all his army, against Jerusalem and besieged it, and they erected a siege wall about it. So the city was besieged to the eleventh year of King Zedekiah.

15. Zedekiah's rebellion (II K. 24 20b. 25 1. 2)

The word which came to Jeremiah from Jehovah when King Zedekiah sent to him Pashhur, the son of Malchijah and Zephaniah the son of Maaseiah the priest, to say: Inquire of Jehovah for us, for the king of Babylon is making war against us. Perhaps Jehovah will deal according to all his wondrous works and that one will withdraw from us.

16. His inquiry of Jeremiah (Jer. 21 1. 2)

Then Jeremiah said to them, Thus shall ye say to Zedekiah king of Judah: 'Thus saith Jehovah: "Behold, the weapons of war with which ye are fighting the Chaldeans who are besieging you without the walls, will I turn back into the midst of this city. And I myself will fight against you with an outstretched hand and a strong arm, in anger and in great wrath. And I will smite all the inhabitants of this city, both man and beast, with a great pestilence so that they shall die. And afterwards, saith Jehovah, I will give Zedekiah the king of Judah and his servants and the people that are left in this city from the pestilence and the sword and famine, into the hand of the enemy and of those who seek their life, and they shall smite them with the edge of the sword, neither sparing them nor showing compassion."'

17. Declaration that the city will surely fall (3-7)

And to this people shalt thou say, Thus saith Jehovah: 'Behold I set before you the way of life and of death; whoever remains in this city shall die by the sword and by pestilence; but whoever goes out and surrenders to the Chaldeans, who are besieging you, shall live, and his life shall be to him for a prey; for I have set my face against this

18. Only hope is submission (8-10)

city for evil and not for good; it shall be given into the hands of the king of Babylon and he shall burn it with fire.'

19. Re-enslavement of the liberated Hebrew slaves (34 8-10a.c.11b)

The word that came to Jeremiah from Jehovah, after King Zedekiah had made a covenant with the people, to proclaim a general liberation, that each should let his male and female slaves go free in case they were Hebrews or Hebrewesses; that none out of Judah should be a slave. But all the princes and all the people who had entered into the covenant, that each should let his male and female slaves go free, brought them again into subjection as male and female slaves.

20. The divine judgment awaiting the faithless rulers of Judah (12-22)

Therefore the word of Jehovah came to Jeremiah, saying, Thus saith Jehovah: 'I made a covenant with your fathers in the day that I brought them forth from the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage, saying, "At the end of six years thou shalt set free the Hebrew brother, who has been sold to thee and has served thee six years, and thou shalt let him go free," but they neither hearkened to me nor inclined their ear. And ye had now turned and done that which is pleasing to me, in proclaiming freedom each to his neighbor, and ye made a covenant before me in the temple which is called by my name. But ye have changed your mind and profaned my name, and made each his male and female slaves, whom ye had let go free at their pleasure, return to be male and female slaves again.' Therefore thus saith Jehovah: 'Ye have not hearkened to me, to proclaim freedom, each to his neighbor—now I proclaim to you a freedom, to become the prey of the sword, the pestilence, and the famine; and I will make you an object of terror to all the kingdoms of the earth. And I will deliver over the men who have transgressed my covenant, who have not performed the words of the covenant which they made before the calf which they cut in two and passed between its parts—the princes of Judah, and the eunuchs, and the priests, and the people—I will even give them into the hand of their enemies, and their dead bodies shall be food for the birds of the heavens and the beasts of the earth. And I will give Zedekiah king of Judah and his princes into the hand of their enemies, the forces of the king of Babylon who have gone away from you. Behold, I will command,' saith Je-

hovah, 'and cause them to return to this city, and they shall besiege it and take it and burn it with fire; and I will make the cities of Judah an uninhabited desolation.'

21. Zedekiah's request (37 3-5)

And Zedekiah the king sent Jehucal the son of Shelemiah and Zephaniah the son of Maaseiah, the priest, to Jeremiah, saying, Pray now to Jehovah for us. Now in that time Jeremiah went in and out of the city, for they had not put him in prison. And Pharaoh's army had come forth from Egypt, and the Chaldeans had received a report regarding them, and had abandoned the siege of Jerusalem.

22. His prediction of Jerusalem's destruction (6-10)

Then the word of Jehovah came to Jeremiah, saying, Thus saith Jehovah: 'Thus shalt thou say to the king of Judah, who sent to me to inquire of me: "Behold, Pharaoh's army, which has come out to help you, shall return to Egypt. Then the Chaldeans shall come back and fight against the city and shall take it and burn it with fire."' Thus saith Jehovah: 'Do not deceive yourselves with the idea that the Chaldeans will depart from you; for they shall not depart. For though ye had smitten the whole army of the Chaldeans that fight against you, and there remained but wounded men, yet would these rise up each in his tent, and burn this city with fire.'

23. Jeremiah falsely accused of attempting to desert (11-15)

But when the army of the Chaldeans had abandoned the siege of Jerusalem for fear of Pharaoh's army, Jeremiah went forth from Jerusalem to go into the land of Benjamin to receive his inheritance there among the people. And when he was in the Gate of Benjamin, a captain of the guard was there, by the name of Rijah the son of Shelemiah, the son of Hananiah. And he laid hold on Jeremiah, saying, You are going over to the Chaldeans. Then Jeremiah said, It is false; I am not going over to the Chaldeans. He, however, paid no heed to Jeremiah but brought him to the princes. And the princes were angry with Jeremiah and smote him and put him in the house of Jonathan the chancellor, for they had made that the prison.

24. His secret interview with the king (16-20)

And thus Jeremiah came into the house of the cistern and into the cells; and he remained there many days. Then Zedekiah sent and summoned him; and the king questioned him secretly and said, Is there any word from Jehovah? And Jeremiah said, There is. You shall be delivered into

the hand of the king of Babylon. Moreover Jeremiah said to Zedekiah, What crime have I committed against you or your servants or this people, that you have put me in prison? Where now are your prophets, who prophesied to you, saying, 'The king of Babylon shall not come against this land?' And now, O my lord the king; let my petition be presented before you, that you will not let me be taken back to the house of Jonathan the chancellor, lest I die there.

25. In the court of the guard (21)

Then the king gave command and they committed Jeremiah to the court of the guard, and they gave him daily a loaf of bread from the bakers' street, until all the bread in the city was gone. Thus Jeremiah remained in the court of the guard.

26. The charge of the nobles (38 1-4)

But when Shephatiah the son of Mattan, and Gedaliah the son of Pashhur, and Jehucal the son of Shelemiah, and Pashhur the son of Malchijah, heard the words that Jeremiah spoke to all the people, saying, Thus saith Jehovah: 'He that abideth in this city shall die by the sword, by the famine; but he who goes over to the Chaldeans shall live and his life shall be to him as booty, and he shall live'; also, Thus saith Jehovah: 'This city shall surely be given into the hand of the army of the king of Babylon and he shall take it,' the princes said to the king, Let this man be put to death, since he weakens the hands of the soldiers who remain in this city and the hands of all the people, in speaking such words to them; for this man seeks not the welfare of this people but the hurt.

27. Jeremiah cast into a cistern to die (5, 6)

Then Zedekiah the king said, See, he is in your hands, for the king was not able to do anything against them. Thereupon they took Jeremiah and cast him into the cistern of Malchijah the king's son, that was in the court of the guard, and let Jeremiah down with cords. And in the cistern there was no water, but mire, and Jeremiah sank into the mire.

28. His rescue by Ebed-melech (7-13)

Now when Ebed-melech the Cushite, a eunuch, who was in the royal palace heard that they had put Jeremiah in the cistern, while the king was sitting in the Gate of Benjamin, Ebed-melech went out to him and said, My lord the king, these men have done wrong in all that they have done to

Jeremiah the prophet, whom they have cast into the cistern; and he must soon die in the place where he is, because of the famine, for there is no more bread in the city. Then the king commanded Ebed-melech the Cushite, saying, Take from here three men with you and draw up Jeremiah the prophet from the cistern before he dies. So Ebed-melech took the men with him and went into the royal palace below the treasury and took from there rags and worn-out garments, and let them down by cords to Jeremiah in the cistern. And Ebed-melech the Cushite said to Jeremiah, Put now these rags and worn-out garments below your armpits under the cords. And Jeremiah did so. Then they drew up him with the cords and took him out of the cistern. And Jeremiah remained in the court of the guard.

29. The king's inquiries and assurance of protection (14-16)

Then the king sent and took Jeremiah to him into the third entry which leads into the temple of Jehovah. And the king said to Jeremiah, I should like to ask you something, conceal nothing from me. Then Jeremiah said to Zedekiah, If I declare it to you, will you promise not to put me to death? And if I give you counsel, you will not hearken to me. Then the king swore secretly to Jeremiah, saying, As Jehovah liveth, who hath given us this life, I will not put you to death, neither will I give you into the hand of these men.

30. Jeremiah's reiterated declaration that surrender alone would save the king and city (17-23)

Then Jeremiah said to Zedekiah, Thus saith Jehovah: 'If thou wilt give thyself up to the princes of the king of Babylon, then thy life shall be preserved and this city shall not be burned with fire, and thou shalt live, together with thy household. But if thou wilt not give thyself up, then this city shall be given into the hand of the Chaldeans, who will burn it with fire, and thou shalt not escape from their hand. Then the king said to Jeremiah, I am afraid of the Jews who have gone over to the Chaldeans, lest they deliver me into their hand and they mock me. But Jeremiah said, They shall not deliver you. Obey, I beseech you, the voice of Jehovah, in that which I speak to you; so it shall be well with you. But if you refuse to give yourself up, this is the revelation that Jehovah hath showed me: Behold, all the women who are left in the king of Judah's palace

shall be brought forth to the princes of the king of Babylon, singing:

They have betrayed thee; they have overcome thee, thy familiar friends!
They have caused thy feet to sink in the mire; they turn back!
They shall also bring out all your sons to the Chaldeans. You yourself shall not escape out of their hand, but shall be taken by the hand of the king of Babylon; and this city shall be burned.

31. Secrecy regarding the interview (24-28a)

Then Zedekiah said to Jeremiah, Let no man know of these words, or you may die. But if the princes hear that I have talked with you, and come to you, and say to you, 'Declare to us now what you have said to the king—hide it not from us, otherwise we will put you to death—also what the king said to you,' then say to them, 'I presented my petition before the king, that he would not make me return to Jonathan's house, to die there.' Then all the princes came to Jeremiah and inquired of him; and he told them these words just as the king had commanded. So they ceased questioning him, for the matter was not reported. But Jeremiah remained in the court of the guard until the day that Jerusalem was captured.

32. The reward promised Ebed-melech (39 15-18)

Now the word of Jehovah came to Jeremiah, while he was shut up in the court of the guard, saying, Go, and speak to Ebed-melech the Cushite, saying, 'Thus saith Jehovah, the God of Israel: "Behold, I will bring my words upon this city for evil and not for good. But I will deliver thee in that day," saith Jehovah, "and thou shalt not be given into the hand of the men of whom thou art afraid. For I will surely save thee and thou shalt not fall by the sword, but thy life shall be as booty to thee, because thou hast put thy trust in me," saith Jehovah.'

33. Invitation for Jeremiah to buy family lands (32 1. 7-8a)

This word came to Jeremiah from Jehovah, in the tenth year [587 B.C.] of Zedekiah the king, which was the eighteenth year of Nebuchadrezzar, when the army of the king of Babylon was besieging Jerusalem and Jeremiah was shut up in the guard-house, which was by the royal palace where

Zedekiah the king had shut him up: Behold Hanamel, the son of Shallum thine uncle is coming to thee to say, 'Buy my field that is in Anathoth; for thou, as the nearest relative, hast the right of buying it. And Hanamel, mine uncle's son, came to me into the guard court and said, Buy my field that is in Anathoth in the land of Benjamin; for the right of inheritance is thine and the redemption is thine.

34. Significance of the purchase (6b-15)

Then I knew that it was Jehovah's word. And I bought the field of Hanamel, mine uncle's son, and weighed out to him seventeen shekels of silver. And I signed the deed and sealed it and took witnesses, weighing out the money to him in the balances. Then I took the sealed purchase deed and gave it to Baruch the son of Neriah the son of Maaseiah, in the presence of Hanamel my uncle's son, and in the presence of the witnesses who had signed the purchase deed, and in the presence of the Jews in the guard court. And I gave this charge to Baruch in their presence: Thus saith Jehovah of hosts: 'Take this purchase deed and put it in an earthen vessel, that it may remain for years to come.' For thus saith Jehovah: 'Houses and fields and vineyards shall yet again be bought in this land.'

I. The False Prophets in Judah's History. The false prophets play an increasingly prominent rôle in the history of the Hebrews during the years preceding the Babylonian exile. From the days of Ahab, when four hundred false prophets stood opposed to the one true prophet Micaiah (§ LXIV), they appear to have far exceeded in numbers the true prophets, like Elijah and Jeremiah. Amaziah, the priest who drove the prophet Amos from Bethel, was evidently well acquainted with a type of prophet who predicted good or evil in order to extract a bribe or gift from the credulous. Micah had only contempt for the mercenary false prophets of his day. Ezekiel attributed Judah's downfall to the influence of these false prophets. From Jeremiah's letter to the exiles it is evident that men of this type were to be found even among the Jews in distant Babylonia. Jeremiah was constantly confronted by them, especially in the chaotic years immediately preceding the final destruction of Jerusalem.

From the many references to them it is possible to determine their real character. Jeremiah, it is true, associates them with those survivals of ancient heathenism, the diviners, the dreamers, the soothsayers and

the sorcerers; but the false prophets who misled the nation did so in the name of Jehovah. Many of them were doubtless deliberate deceivers of the people; others were self-deceived. The ancient Hebrew state offered peculiar temptations to this class. As a rule the people listened attentively to a man who claimed to speak with divine authority. The East is famous for its religious credulity. Every abnormal psychic state was also interpreted as a form of divine revelation. The man who had strange dreams, or who was at times seized by religious ecstasy, or subject to some mental disorder, was in great danger of deceiving both himself and the people. Moreover, from earliest times, the prophets appear to have received gifts for their services (I Sam. 9^{8}, I Kgs. 14^{3}, II Kgs. $8^{8, 9}$, Am. 7^{12}). The prophets connected with the royal sanctuaries or the court were probably supported from the public treasury. The position of a popular prophet was also one of honor. Hence the temptations to pose as spokesmen for Jehovah proved, in the case of many, too strong to be resisted.

II. **The Distinction Between the False and True Prophets.** The difficulty which the people felt in distinguishing between the true and the false prophet is obvious. Both used the same vocabulary and claimed the same divine authority; and yet when the two types of prophet made exactly opposite assertions, as in the contest between Jeremiah and Hananiah, the people were forced to decide; and this they doubtless did in accord with the accepted standards. The evidence of ecstasy, either while receiving or proclaiming the prophetic message, was evidently, in the popular mind, a strong credential; and yet the greatest prophets, like Amos, Hosea, Isaiah and Jeremiah, rarely, if ever, yielded to this primitive type of religious fervor. The ability to perform miracles or some wonderful act undoubtedly impressed the populace powerfully; and yet the great heralds of ethical righteousness do not appear to have ever employed this means of establishing their authority. The difficulties involved in the test suggested in Deuteronomy 18^{21}, namely, that the fulfilment of the prophet's message be the proof of his authority, are obvious.

Jeremiah truly urged that there was a strong presupposition in favor of the prophet who, in the face of public opinion, predicted disaster; and that only the event could establish the reputation of him who predicted peace. He also declared that the immoral acts of the false prophets gave the lie to their message. He clearly pointed out the fundamental errors of the false prophets of his day: that they were still dreaming for their nation the ancient dreams of material and national glory; that

they were blind to the moral conditions in Judah, as well as to the political situation; that they thought of Jehovah simply as a powerful deity who would protect at any cost the inviolability of his city and temple; and that they had utterly failed to appreciate the higher revelation of his character as a God of impartial justice and moral integrity.

The pernicious influence of the false prophets upon Judah's history cannot be overestimated. Not only did they lure the people on to their ruin, but they also, for the time being at least, undermined the influence of the true prophets like Jeremiah. The graphic account of Jeremiah's contest with Hananiah illustrates the dramatic method which each group of prophets used, in order to influence the people to accept their teachings. As was inevitable, the false prophets destroyed public confidence in the message of the true prophets, and hastened the day when the voice of these heralds of Jehovah ceased to be heard in Israel.

III. **Rebellion Against Nebuchadrezzar.** The misleading assurances of the false prophets prepared the way for the next and last fatal step, in Judah's death tragedy. In 588 B.C., an ambitious and energetic ruler by the name of Hophra, came to the throne of Egypt. At the very beginning of his reign he appears to have stirred up the different states of Palestine to rebellion against Nebuchadrezzar. Zedekiah does not appear to have taken the initiative, but to have yielded to the demands of the neighboring kings of Edom, Moab, Ammon, and Tyre and Sidon, in joining the coalition. Jeremiah, as well as Ezekiel, protested vigorously against the alliance and pointed out clearly the fatal consequences. The popular hope, however, that by union they would be able successfully to resist the Chaldeans was too strong to be overcome.

In 588 B.C., Zedekiah rebelled, and by the end of that year, or early in 587, the Chaldeans had overrun Palestine, apparently conquering without serious opposition everything except Tyre in the north, Lachish and Azekah on the western borders of Judah, and Jerusalem. Tyre, which had apparently led in the rebellion, because of its natural strength and great resources, was able to hold out for many years against the besiegers.

Nebuchadrezzar established his headquarters at Riblah, on the upper Orontes, where he could remain in close touch with events in the heart of the empire and at the same time direct the campaign against the rebels.

Jerusalem was able to resist the besiegers for over a year. The people evidently hoped against hope for a signal deliverance. King Zedekiah even sent a messenger to Jeremiah to secure from him, if possible, the assurance that Jehovah would again, as of old, perform a miracle

and interpose to deliver his people. The prophet's reply was even more appalling than the most fearful could have anticipated. In the mind of the great prophet, who appreciated Jehovah's justice and impartiality even more than his might, there was no cause nor place for a miracle. He recognized that moral causes produce inevitable effects. Jeremiah therefore declared that Jehovah, compelled by the deeds of the guilty people, was himself fighting against them, and that it was futile for the king and his nobles to expect either deliverance or mercy. The one hope of escape, which the prophet held out, was in immediate surrender.

IV. **Events During the Siege.** In their extremity the leaders in Jerusalem sought to purchase Jehovah's favor by complying with the long-neglected law which demanded that every Hebrew slave should be set free after he had served six years (§§ LXXXIV[48]). Accordingly, a sacred covenant was made before the temple between Jehovah and the people, according to which they agreed to free their countrymen from servitude with the hope that they themselves should be delivered from the foreign invaders. To seal this covenant, a calf was cut in two, and the princes of Judah passed between the severed parts. This peculiar type of blood covenant was similar to that recorded in Genesis 15^{9-17}, in which the solemn agreement between Abraham and Jehovah was sealed when the symbol of Jehovah's presence passed between the severed parts of the sacrificial offerings.

Seemingly, as a divine fulfilment of the terms of the covenant, the Chaldean army suddenly withdrew from Jerusalem. The cause was the advance of the Egyptian army to the borders of Palestine. Elated by this remarkable deliverance, the nobles of Judah revealed their deep depravity and confirmed Jeremiah's low estimate of them by breaking their solemn covenant and by forcing the freedmen back into their old position of servitude.

Jeremiah's denunciation of this shameless crime and his prediction that the besiegers would quickly return only kindled still further the fury of the rulers. The king himself alone continued to seek the counsels of the prophet; but Zedekiah was too weak and too helpless in the hands of his nobles to act in accordance with the radical measures proposed. Instead, Jeremiah's foes threw him into prison on the charge of being a traitor. Although he was able for a time to rescue the prophet from their hands, Zedekiah was at last obliged to turn him over to his infuriated nobles, who left Jeremiah in a vile cistern, there to die of starvation. The fidelity of a foreign eunuch and the secret friendship of the king alone saved Jeremiah at this time from a martyr's death.

V. **Jeremiah's Belief in the Future of His Race.** Unpopularity, persecution, and the presence of death did not daunt the valiant prophet. On every possible occasion and in the clearest and most uncompromising terms he declared that there was absolutely no hope of immediate deliverance. Yet while he was still a prisoner in the royal palace, he expressed in the most striking form his undying faith in the future of his race. By the purchase of an ancestral field he proclaimed, by act as well as word, his firm conviction that the time was not far distant when the Hebrew state would be restored and the ancient laws and customs would again be enforced. In the light of his searching analysis of conditions, the present offered only certain disaster and national destruction; but with that broader appreciation of Jehovah's purpose, which he shared with Ezekiel, he saw clearly that the coming national calamity was but a part of that divine instruction, which the blind, wilful, guilty nation must receive. He firmly believed in the ultimate possibilities of his race, in the survival of its faith, in its noble destiny, and in the gracious purpose of the God who was guiding with no uncertain hand the course of human history. There are fewer sublimer scenes in human history than that of the aged and lonely prophet, spurned by his contemporaries, facing death at every turn, calmly viewing the overthrow of his land, of the sacred city and of the temple about which centred the faith and religious institutions of his race; yet absolutely confident that all the passing ruin and desolation were but the door which led to a larger and nobler national life.

§ XC. THE FINAL CAPTURE OF JERUSALEM AND THE END OF THE HEBREW STATE

1. Flight, capture and final fate of Zedekiah (Jer. 38 28b. 39 1-7)

Now when Jerusalem was taken (in the ninth year of Zedekiah king of Judah [586 B.C.] in the tenth month), Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon and all his army came against Jerusalem and besieged it. In the eleventh year of Zedekiah on the ninth day of the fourth month, a breach was made in the city and all the princes of the king of Babylon came and sat in the middle gate: Nebushazban the chief of the eunuchs, and Nergal-sharezer the chief of the magicians, with all the rest of the princes of the king of Babylon. And when Zedekiah the king of Judah and all the warriors saw them, they fled and went forth out of the city by night by

the way of the king's garden, through the gate between the two walls, and went out toward the Arabah. But the army of the Chaldeans pursued after them and overtook Zedekiah in the plains of Jericho. Then they took and brought him up to Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon to Riblah in the land of Hamath; and he passed judgment upon him. And the king of Babylon slew the sons of Zedekiah in Riblah before his eyes; also the king of Babylon slew all the nobles of Judah. Moreover he put out Zedekiah's eyes and bound him in chains, to carry him to Babylon.

2. Destruction of the city and fate of the people (II K. 25 8-12)

But on the seventh day of the month, which was in the nineteenth year of King Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon, Nebuzaradan the commander of the body-guard, a servant of the king of Babylon, came to Jerusalem. And he burnt the temple of Jehovah and the royal palace and all the houses of Jerusalem, even every great house he burnt with fire. And all the troops of the Chaldeans, who were with the commander of the body-guard, broke down the walls round about Jerusalem. And the rest of the people who were left in the city and the deserters who had gone over to the king of Babylon and the rest of the architects, Nebuzaradan the commander of the body-guard carried away captive. But the commander of the body-guard left some of the poorest of the land as vinedressers and farmers.

3. Plunder of the temple (13-15)

But the pillars of brass that were in the temple of Jehovah, and the stands and the brazen sea that were in the temple of Jehovah the Chaldeans broke in pieces, and carried the brass from them to Babylon. Also the pots, the shovels, the snuffers, the bowls, and all the vessels of brass, with which the temple service was conducted, they took away. And the fire-pans and the basins, that which was of gold, the commander of the body-guard took away in gold and that which was of silver, in silver.

4. Public execution of certain of the captives (18-21)

And the commander of the body-guard took Seraiah the chief priest and Zephaniah the second priest and the three keepers of the threshold. And from the city he took an officer who was set over the troops; and five men who stood close to the king, who were found in the city; and the scribe of the commander-in-chief, who mustered the people of the land, and sixty men of the people of the land, who were

found in the city. And Nebuzaradan the commander of the body-guard took them and brought them to the king of Babylon at Riblah. And the king of Babylon smote them and put them to death at Riblah in the land of Hamath. So Judah was carried away captive from its native land.

5. Numbers carried away (Jer. 52 28-30)

This is the people whom Nebuchadrezzar carried away captive: in the seventh year, three thousand and twenty-three Jews; in the eighteenth year of Nebuchadrezzar he carried away captive from Jerusalem eight hundred and thirty-two persons; in the twenty-third year of Nebuchadrezzar Nebuzaradan the commander of the body-guard carried away captive of the Jews seven hundred and forty-five persons. The total number of persons was four thousand, six hundred.

6. Special provisions made for Jeremiah (39 11-14)

Now Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon had given the following command concerning Jeremiah to Nebuzaradan the commander of the body-guard, Take him, and look well to him, and do him no harm; but do to him as he shall direct you. So Nebuzaradan the commander of the body-guard, and Nebushazban the chief of the eunuchs, and Nergal-sharezer the chief of the magicians, and all the chief officers of the king of Babylon sent and took Jeremiah out of the court of the guard and gave him into the charge of Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, that he should carry him home; so he dwelt among the people.

7. Set free and allowed to return to Gedaliah (40 1-6)

The word which came to Jeremiah from Jehovah after Nebuzaradan the commander of the guard had let him go from Ramah, when he had taken him bound in chains among all the captives who were carried away to Babylon. And the commander of the guard took Jeremiah and said to him, Jehovah your God pronounced evil upon this place; and Jehovah hath brought it and done just as he said, for you have sinned against Jehovah and have not obeyed his voice, therefore this thing is come upon you. And now behold, I loose you this day from the chains which are upon your hand. If it seem good to you to come with me to Babylon, come, and I will look out for you. But if it seem undesirable to you to come with me to Babylon, do not come; but go back to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, whom the king of Babylon has made governor over

the cities of Judah, and dwell with him among the people, or go wherever it seems right to you to go. So the commander of the body-guard gave him provisions and a present, and sent him away. Then Jeremiah went to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam to Mizpah, and dwelt with him among the people who were left in the land.

8. Gedaliah (II K. 25 22)

Now over the people who were left in the land of Judah, whom Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon had left, he made Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, governor.

9. Gathering of the local chiefs (Jer. 40 7-12)

Then all the commanders of the forces that were in the fields, together with their men, heard that the king of Babylon had made Gedaliah the son of Ahikam governor in the land and had committed to him men, women, and children, and of the poorest of the land, such as were not carried away captive to Babylon. And they came to Gedaliah at Mizpah: Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, and Johanan, the son of Kareah and Seraiah the son of Tanhumeth, and the sons of Ephai the Netophathite, and Jezaniah the son of the Maacathite, together with their men. And Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, swore to them and to their men, saying, Do not be afraid to serve the Chaldeans, settle down and be subject to the king of Babylon, and it shall be well with you. As for me, I will dwell at Mizpah, as your representative to receive the Chaldeans who shall come to us, but you gather for yourselves wine and fruits and oil, and put them in your vessels and dwell in your cities of which you have taken possession. Likewise when all the Jews, who were in Moab and among the Ammonites and in Edom and in all the countries, heard that the king of Babylon had left a remnant of Judah, and that he had set over them Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, all the Jews returned out of all the places whither they had been driven, and came to the land of Judah to Gedaliah at Mizpah, and gathered wine and fruits in great abundance.

10. His disregard of the conspiracy to take his life (13-16)

But Johanan the son of Kareah and all the commanders of the forces that were in the fields came to Gedaliah at Mizpah, and said to him, Do you know that Baalis the king of the Ammonites has sent Ishmael the son of Nethaniah to take your life? But Gedaliah the son of Ahikam did not believe them. Then Johanan the son of Kareah spoke to

Gedaliah in Mizpah secretly, saying, Let me go and slay Ishmael the son of Nethaniah without any one's knowing it. Why should he take your life with the result that all the Jews who are scattered and the remnant of Judah should perish? But Gedaliah the son of Ahikam said to Johanan the son of Kareah, You shall not do this thing, for you speak falsely regarding Ishmael.

11. Ishmael's treacherous murder of Gedaliah and his men (41 1-3)

But afterwards in the seventh month, Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, the son of Elishama, of the royal line, with ten men, came to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam at Mizpah; and there they were eating together in Mizpah. Then Ishmael the son of Nethaniah and the ten men who were with him rose up and smote Gedaliah the son of Ahikam the son of Shaphan with the sword and thus slew him, whom the king of Babylon had made governor over the land. Ishmael also slew all the Jews who were with Gedaliah at Mizpah, and the Chaldeans who were found there.

12. Massacre of the pilgrims (4-9)

But on the day after he had slain Gedaliah, when no one yet knew it, there came men from Shechem, from Shiloh, and from Samaria, eighty men with shorn beards and with their clothes torn, and with self-inflicted cuts bearing cereal-offerings and frankincense in their hand, to bring them to the temple of Jehovah. And Ishmael the son of Nethaniah went forth from Mizpah to meet them, weeping as he went, and when he met them, he said to them, Come to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam. However, when they came into the midst of the city, Ishmael the son of Nethaniah slew them, and cast them into the midst of the cistern with the aid of the men who were with him. But ten men were found among them who said to Ishmael, Slay us not; for we have stores hidden in the field, of wheat, barley, oil, and honey. So he stopped and did not slay them together with their kinsmen. Now the cistern into which Ishmael cast all the dead bodies of the men whom he had slain is the great cistern, which Asa the king had made on account of the attack of Baasha king of Israel. Ishmael the son of Nethaniah filled it with the slain.

13. Departure with captives (10)

Then Ishmael carried away captive the rest of the people who were in Mizpah, even the king's daughters and all the people in Mizpah, whom Nebuzaradan the commander of the body-guard had placed under the charge of Gedaliah

the son of Ahikam. Ishmael the son of Nethaniah arose and set out to go over to the Ammonites.

14 Their recapture by Johanan (11-16)

But when Johanan the son of Kareah and all the commanders of the forces who were with him heard of all the evil that Ishmael the son of Nethaniah had done, they took all the men and went to fight with Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, and found him by the great pools that are in Gibeon. And when all the people who were with Ishmael saw Johanan the son of Kareah and all the commanders of the forces who were with him, they were glad. So all the people whom Ishmael had carried away captive from Mizpah turned about and came back and went to Johanan the son of Kareah. But Ishmael the son of Nethaniah escaped from Johanan with eight men, and went to the Ammonites. Then Johanan the son of Kareah and all the commanders of the forces, who were with him, took the remnant of the people whom he had recovered from Ishmael, the men (soldiers), the women, the children, and the eunuchs, whom he had brought back from Gibeon.

15. Preparations for the flight (17-18)

And they went further and dwelt in Gedroth Chimham, which is near Bethlehem, in order to set out on the way to Egypt on account of the Chaldeans, for they were afraid of them, because Ishmael the son of Nethaniah had slain Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, whom the king of Babylon had made governor over the land.

16. The request of the people (42 1-6)

Then all the commanders of the forces and Johanan the son of Kareah and Azariah the son of Hoshaiah, and all the people small and great came near, and said to Jeremiah the prophet, Permit us to bring our petition before you that you may supplicate Jehovah your God for us, even for all this remnant, for we are left but a few out of many—you yourself see us here—that Jehovah your God may show us the way wherein we should walk, and the thing that we should do. Then Jeremiah the prophet said to them, I have heard you; behold I will pray to Jehovah your God according to your words, and whatever Jehovah shall answer you, I will declare it to you; I will keep nothing back from you. Then they said to Jeremiah, Jehovah be a true and faithful witness against us, if we do not according to all the word with which Jehovah your God shall send you to us. Whether it

be good or whether it be evil, we will obey the voice of Jehovah our God, to whom we send you, that it may be well with us, when we obey the voice of Jehovah our God.

17. The divine command to remain in the land (7-17)

And after ten days the word of Jehovah came to Jeremiah. And he called together Johanan the son of Kareah and all the commanders of the forces that were with him and all the people small and great, and said to them, Thus saith Jehovah, the God of Israel, to whom you sent me to present your supplication before him: 'If ye will still abide in this land, then will I build you and not pull you down, and I will plant you and not pluck you up; for I am sorry for the evil that I have done to you. Be not afraid of the king of Babylon, for I am with you to save you and to deliver you from his hand. And I will grant you mercy, that he may have mercy upon you and let you return to your own land.' But if ye say, 'We will not dwell in this land; so that ye obey not the voice of Jehovah your God,' thinking, 'No; but we will go to the land of Egypt, where we shall see no war nor hear the sound of the trumpet nor be hungry, and there will we remain;' then hear the word of Jehovah, O remnant of Judah: Thus saith Jehovah of hosts, the God of Israel: 'If ye have indeed determined to enter into Egypt and go to sojourn there, then shall the sword, which ye fear, overtake you there in the land of Egypt; and the famine, of which ye are afraid, press hard upon you there in Egypt, so that ye shall die there. Thus all the men who have determined to go into Egypt to sojourn there, shall die by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence, and none of them shall remain or escape from the evil that I will bring upon them.'

18. Certain judgment upon the disobedient people (18-22)

For thus saith Jehovah of hosts, the God of Israel: 'As mine anger and my wrath have been poured out upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so shall my wrath be poured out upon you, when ye shall enter into Egypt; and ye shall be an object of execration, of astonishment, of cursing, and of reproach, and ye shall never see this place again.' Jehovah hath spoken concerning you, O remnant of Judah, 'Go ye not into Egypt.' Know certainly that I have testified to you this day. For you have deceived yourselves, for you sent me to Jehovah your God, saying, 'Pray for us to Jehovah our God, and just as Jehovah our God shall say, so

declare to us, and we will do it.' And I have this day declared it to you, but you have not obeyed the voice of Jehovah your God in anything for which he hath sent me to you. Now therefore know certainly that you shall die by the sword, by famine, and by pestilence, in the place whither you desire to go to sojourn.

19. Departure of all the people to Egypt (43 1-7)

But when Jeremiah had ceased speaking to the people all the words of Jehovah their God, with which Jehovah their God had sent him to them, even all these words, Azariah the son of Hoshaiah, and Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the proud men spoke, saying to Jeremiah, You speak falsely; Jehovah our God hath not sent you to say, 'Ye shall not go into Egypt to sojourn there.' But it is Baruch the son of Neriah who stirs you up against us, to deliver us into the hand of the Chaldeans, that they may put us to death, and carry us away captives to Babylon. So Johanan the son of Kareah and all the commanders of the forces and all the people did not obey the voice of Jehovah, to dwell in the land of Judah. But Johanan the son of Kareah and all the commanders of the forces took all the remnant of Judah, who had returned from all the nations whither they had been driven to sojourn in the land of Judah, the men, the women, the children, the king's daughters, and every person whom Nebuzaradan the commander of the body-guard had left with Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, and Jeremiah the prophet and Baruch the son of Neriah, and they came into the land of Egypt; for they did not obey the voice of Jehovah; and they came to Tahpanhes.

20. The promised restoration (31 27. 28)

Behold, the days are coming, is the oracle of Jehovah,
That I will sow Israel and Judah with the seed of man and the seed of beast.
And as once I watched over them to pluck up and to afflict,
So will I be watchful over them to build and to plant.

21. Individual responsibility (29. 30)

In those days they will no more say:
'The fathers have eaten unripe grapes and the children's teeth are set on edge,'

But every one shall die for his own iniquity;
Every man who eats the unripe grapes, his teeth shall be set on edge.

Behold, the days are coming, is Jehovah's oracle,
That I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah;
Not like the covenant which I made with their fathers,
In the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt,—
My covenant which they themselves broke and I was displeased with them,—
But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel:
After those days, is the oracle of Jehovah,
I will put my teaching in their breast and on their heart will I write it;
And I will be to them a God and they shall be to me a people.
And they shall not teach any more every man his neighbor,
And every man his brother saying, Know Jehovah,
For they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest;
For I will forgive their iniquities and remember their sins no more.

22. The new personal covenant between God and each individual (31-34)

I. **The Final Destruction of Jerusalem.** In July, 586 B.C., Jerusalem fell for the last time before the Babylonian conquerors. Including the intermission during which the Chaldeans had withdrawn to meet the Egyptian army, the siege lasted but a year and a half. The comparative shortness of the period suggests the weakness of the defenders and the energy with which the Chaldeans conducted their operations. Many of the Hebrews acted on Jeremiah's advice and surrendered to the enemy. Zedekiah himself would have been glad to have followed the counsel of the prophet, but he did not dare and the nobles who persisted in continuing the resistance were apparently as lacking in ability and courage as they were in moral character.

The crisis came when the battering rams at last broke down a section of the wall—probably on the more exposed northern side of the city—and the Chaldean soldiers poured through the breach. The king's

palace and garden were in the southern end of the city, below the temple hill. Zedekiah with his warriors succeeded in escaping by night through the southern gate, and fled down along the Kidron Valley toward the Jordan. They were quickly overtaken, however, by the Chaldeans and brought before Nebuchadrezzar at his headquarters at Riblah, on the upper Orontes. Here the extreme penalty was meted out to them. The king's sons were slain in his presence, and then his own eyes were put out and he was carried off to Babylon to figure as a warning to all subject princelings who might be tempted to rebel against the great king.

In the eyes of Nebuchadrezzar, Jerusalem by its repeated rebellions had proved itself to be a centre of sedition. With great deliberation and thoroughness the Chaldean troops went about the work of destruction. The temple was stripped of all its valuable utensils; the heavier objects, like the pillars of brass and the brazen sea, were broken in pieces and carried away to Babylonian foundries. Then the temple was burnt to the ground, together with the royal palace, and all the houses of the nobles and of the wealthy classes. The city walls were also broken down, leaving Jerusalem a ruin and a heap, an object lesson, showing to all the world the inevitable consequences of the follies and crimes which for over a century had been earnestly and constantly denounced by Israel's faithful patriot-prophets.

II. **The Remnants of the Nation.** In dealing with the survivors of the final siege of Jerusalem, the Chaldeans also proceeded with their usual judicial thoroughness. Each prominent rebel was apparently tried independently and condemned according to his guilt. No mercy, however, was shown to the leaders. The chief priest and his deputies and the leading religious, civic and military officers were brought before Nebuchadrezzar, at Riblah, and there put to death. Only the poorer classes and the inhabitants of the towns outside of Jerusalem, who early submitted to the Chaldeans, were spared and left to cultivate the land. Jeremiah, whose record was known to the conquerors, was allowed to choose whether he should go to Babylon or remain with the survivors in Judah.

If the list given in Jeremiah 52, of those who were carried captive by Nebuchadrezzar in successive deportations, is authentic, the numbers actually deported in connection with the final destruction of Jerusalem were much less than at the first captivity. The siege and the many executions left few heads of families to be carried away by the conquerors, unless, as is possible, the seventh year of Nebuchadrezzar is a scribal error for the seventeenth year. Counting those who were deported in

581 B.C., probably after the murder of Gedaliah, the total number of the three groups of captives is only four thousand six hundred, which is a small proportion of the total population of the land. The round number, ten thousand, given in the book of Kings in connection with the first captivity, can be reconciled with these data in Jeremiah only on the hypothesis that they represent simply heads of families or able-bodied men. Even in that case the total number, including men, women and children, would not be more than between twenty-five and fifty thousand.

From the account of Jeremiah's subsequent experiences in Egypt, as well as from the references from later history, and especially from the papyri recently discovered at Elephantine, which reveal the presence, early in the Persian period, of a large Jewish colony far up the Nile, it is clear that, after the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 B.C., vast numbers of Jews found refuge in this convenient and friendly asylum. It is indeed probable that at this time more Jews were to be found in the land of the Nile than in distant Babylon. Some never returned; but many, like the fugitives who carried away Jeremiah, remained on the eastern borders of Egypt, awaiting the time when they might safely return home. As subsequent events unfolded, the prophetic hopes of a national restoration were realized chiefly through the activity of these Egyptian refugees and of the poorer classes who were left behind in the land.

III. **Gedaliah's Brief Rule.** In the eyes of his contemporaries, Nebuchadrezzar vindicated the authority of his Babylonian gods by destroying the walls of Jerusalem and the temple of Jehovah; but he had no desire to leave the land of Palestine in a state of anarchy without any local government. Over those who were left behind he wisely appointed as governor Gedaliah, the grandson of Josiah's chancellor, Shaphan. Jerusalem being in ruins, Mizpah, north of the ancient capital, was made the seat of Gedaliah's government. Thither the heads of the wandering guerilla bands and the chiefs of the country villages came to swear allegiance to the new government. Many Jewish refugees from Moab, Ammon and Edom soon returned to share in building up the new Hebrew state. It might naturally be inferred from the account of Gedaliah's rule that it lasted but a few months. In the book of Jeremiah, however, the date of the last deportation is 581 B.C., suggesting that Gedaliah's rule continued for at least three or four years. In his care for his subjects, as well as in his loyalty to the Chaldeans, he realized the noblest Hebrew ideals of a just and benign ruler. It requires little imagination to picture the joy and the hope which the changed situation inspired in the mind of the devoted patriot Jeremiah.

Gedaliah's nobility, however, and his unwillingness to suspect another of treachery proved his ruin. A certain Ishmael, of the Judean royal line, probably inspired by jealousy and encouraged by the rival king of Ammon, came to Mizpah with a few of his men and treacherously slew Gedaliah. The murderer fled, but the survivors were panic-stricken. Although they turned to Jeremiah for counsel, they refused to listen to his wise advice to remain in Palestine and to trust to the justice and clemency of the Chaldeans. Instead they attributed the prophet's counsel to the influence of his scribe, Baruch. Accordingly, rallying all the refugees who had returned and all the prominent Jews, who might become the object of Chaldean vengeance, they migrated to find a refuge at Tahpanhes, the ancient Daphnæ, just across the Egyptian border.

IV. **Jeremiah's Tragic Fate.** A late tradition states that Jeremiah died the death of a martyr at the hands of his countrymen in the land of Egypt. It is at least certain that the same tragic fate which pursued him in his native land followed him in the exile. At every stage in the changing fortunes of Judah, he unselfishly, bravely, unflinchingly and unceasingly gave to rulers and people those divinely inspired counsels which, if followed, would have saved them in the hour of peril; but for all this devotion he received only contempt and persecution. The tragedy is all the greater and the devotion the more sublime because the long, tortuous way of sorrow, which Jeremiah trod, was contrary to his strongest instincts. No one can read his fervid prophecies without detecting his strong love for public approval, for the love of friends, and for the joys of social life. He passionately craved the atmosphere of sunshine, joy and peace. But more than all, this Puritan of the olden day loved truth and justice. He, who as a youth had responded to the divine voice speaking clear and strong within him, could not for a moment enjoy a peace purchased by silence or compromise. As he walked, almost alone through the long years, each danger and public insult brought his heart into closer touch with the eternal heart of love. Undoubtedly the author of the immortal fifty-third chapter of Isaiah received many suggestions from Jeremiah's experience, when he drew his picture of the ideal servant of Jehovah:

> He was despised and forsaken of men,
> A man of many pains and acquainted with suffering;
> Like one from whom men hide their face,
> He was despised, so that we esteemed him not.

And yet no one can study carefully the history of this period without coming to the conviction that Jeremiah was the noblest patriot and the greatest prophet of his age. For nearly half a century his personality completely overshadows that of the leading kings, priests and other prophets of Judah. The history of the period is largely a record of his life and teaching. Even though he was despised by his generation and his counsels were almost universally rejected, through all this critical period he kept the true conception of Jehovah and the highest ideals of religion ever before his race, and prepared it unconsciously for the supreme crisis which came during the Babylonian exile. Truly could later generations say of him, as of the greater Prophet of Nazareth, in the language of Isaiah 53:

Surely our sufferings he himself bore,
And our pains he carried;
Yet we esteemed him stricken,
Smitten of God and afflicted.

But he was wounded for our transgressions,
Crushed because of our iniquities;
The chastisement for our well-being was upon him,
And through his stripes healing came to us.

All of us like sheep had gone astray,
We had turned each his own way;
And Jehovah laid upon him
The guilt of us all.

The recognition which his contemporaries refused was given freely and fully by later generations. The exile revealed clearly the greatness of Jeremiah's work and teachings. No character looms larger in post-exilic literature. No earlier prophet is there quoted with greater reverence and devotion. Jewish history after the exile opens appropriately with the statement, "That the word of Jehovah by the mouth of Jeremiah might be accomplished" (Ezra 1[1]). His vision of Israel's spiritual destiny is developed by the great poet-prophet who penned the immortal prophecies found in Isaiah 40–55. His spirit and teachings reappear in some of the sublimest psalms of the Psalter. His prediction regarding the duration of the exile was elaborately interpreted and made

the basis of the chronological system in the book of Daniel. He also figures prominently in later Jewish and Christian tradition (II Mac. 2^{1-15}, 15^{13-16}, Mt. 16^{14}, 27^{9}).

V. **Jeremiah's Abiding Message to the Race.** Jeremiah believed that the territory of Northern and Southern Israel would again be repeopled, and that Jehovah's love for the race would again be expressed in the form of material prosperity; but he completely abandoned the old Semitic conception, which identified religion with the state. With his own eyes he had seen the follies of his nation, and the crimes committed in the name of national religion. As he beheld Judah going down to its ruin, he came to a full appreciation of the importance of the individual. His own personal experience had taught him that faith and worship, and that vital relation with God which is the essence of all religion, were possible without either state or temple ritual. He was preeminently the prophet who proclaimed the religion of the heart (4^{4}, 17^{1}, 24^{7}). The divine promise, which he had given the exiles carried away at the first captivity, had been: "I will give them a heart to know me, that I am Jehovah; and they shall be my people and I will be their God. For they shall return to me with their whole heart."

From Jeremiah apparently comes that profound message which binds the older revelation through the Hebrew race to the fuller and more perfect revelation through the great Prophet-teacher of Nazareth. It places moral responsibility squarely on the shoulders of each individual, and heralds the new era about to open, when the old covenant between Jehovah and the nation Israel, the covenant which was associated with Sinai and whose terms were formulated in the Deuteronomic code, should be succeeded by a new and nobler covenant. It was to be a covenant between God and each individual. Its terms were to be inscribed not on perishable tablets of stone, but by God himself on each human heart. The words and life of Jeremiah himself illustrate in part the character of that divine teaching, and the way in which God was to impart it to the heart of his servants. It was to be taught, not by the lips of prophets, priests or sages, but through vital, personal experiences, and as the spirit of God touched and guided the spirit of man. It was a teaching which placed little emphasis on ceremonial and forms, but demanded the whole love and service of each human being. In turn Jehovah recovenanted to freely and fully forgive the sins of people thus bound to him, and to give to each that intimate knowledge of his divine character and purpose which would make the creature the image and

revelation of the Creator. Thus Jeremiah gave to the race, not only the titles of our Old and New Testaments, but also that conception of religion, as a personal, spiritual relation between God and man, which is the foundation of Christianity and of all true faith.

APPENDIX

I

A PRACTICAL REFERENCE LIBRARY

Books for Constant Reference. The literature which comes from the period of the Divided Kingdom is so voluminous, the critical and historical problems so many, and the extra-biblical, contemporary records are so rich that certain supplemental reference books are almost indispensable. The second volume of the *Student's Old Testament*, entitled *Israel's Historical and Biographical Narrative*, contains the biblical, historical records of the period, arranged in their logical order with detailed introductions to the individual books. The third volume, entitled *Prophetic Addresses, Epistles and Apocalypses*, contains the contemporary prophecies arranged in chronological order with detailed introductions and a full treatment of the entire subject of Hebrew prophecy. The fourth volume, *Israel's Laws and Legal Precedents*, contains the corresponding laws classified according to their subject matter and within each group arranged according to their respective dates. A good, modern Bible dictionary, such as Hastings's one-volume *Dictionary of the Bible*, or better, the larger five-volume edition, should be at the command of every teacher and student. The geographical background of the stirring events of this period is vividly presented in Prof. George Adam Smith's *Historical Geography of the Holy Land.* Assyria touched and influenced Israel's history so fundamentally during these two or three centuries that it is important to refer frequently to a standard history of the Assyrians and Babylonians, such as that of Professor Goodspeed.

Additional Books of Reference: Introduction. Most readers will find the clear, compact, popular Old Testament introductions by Professors McFadyen and Cornill the most helpful. Driver's *Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament* is more technical. Excellent introductions to the individual Old Testament books are found in Hastings's

Dictionary of the Bible, the *Encyclopædia Biblica*, and the *Standard Bible Dictionary*. More detailed introductions to the prophetic and legal books are found in the different commentaries.

Contemporary History and Religion. Winckler's *History of Babylonia and Assyria* supplements at several points Goodspeed's *History of the Babylonians and Assyrians*. Brief but excellent articles on Assyria, Babylonia and Egypt are found in the Bible dictionaries. Breasted's *History of the Ancient Egyptians* and his larger work, *A History of Egypt*, present in clear, attractive form the latest established results of study and research in this field. The articles in the extra volume of Hastings's *Dictionary of the Bible*, on the religion of Israel, the religion of Egypt, and the religion of Babylonia and Assyria, are exceedingly valuable and suggestive. A fuller treatment of the latter theme is found in the excellent volumes on the religion of Babylonia and Assyria, by Professors Jastrow and Rogers. Three or four brief, popular treatments of the religion of Israel have recently been issued by such well-known scholars as Budde, Marti, Addis and Peake. Of these, Marti's *Religion of the Old Testament* is in many ways the freshest and most suggestive.

Hebrew History. Smith's *Old Testament History* and Volume III of McCurdy's *History, Prophecy and the Monuments* deal somewhat fully with the Hebrew life during the period of the Divided Kingdom. A more compact, popular treatment of the subject is found in Wade's *Old Testament History* or Kent's *History of the Hebrew People: Divided Kingdom*. In the second volume of his recent work on *Jerusalem*, George Adam Smith has given the biblical students a fascinating picture of the history of Judah, especially as it centres about its capital city. In his *Decline and Fall of the Kingdom of Judah*, Professor Cheyne deals in his usual brilliant and suggestive way with this important era in Israel's history.

Hebrew Prophecy. W. Robertson Smith's *Prophets of Israel* still remains one of the most stimulating and helpful books in this field. Davidson's *Old Testament Prophecy* is useful, but fails to meet the demand for a vigorous and thorough treatment of the broad theme suggested by its title. Batten's *The Hebrew Prophet* is a more popular presentation of the same subject. The articles *Prophet* and *Prophetic Literature* in the modern Bible dictionaries furnish concise and excellent introductions to the study of the prophets and their work. Cornill's *Prophets of Israel*, although one of the briefest books dealing with this large theme, is one of the best. Many students may also find useful the

brief introductions and paraphrases in Sanders and Kent's *Messages of the Earlier Prophets*. Oesterley's *Evolution of the Messianic Idea* is the latest and in many ways the best historical treatment of one of the most difficult subjects in the wide realm of Hebrew prophecy.

Commentaries. The English commentaries dealing in detail with the different books written during this period differ greatly in value. The prophecies of Amos and Hosea are on the whole most fully and satisfactorily treated. The voluminous and monumental work of the late lamented President Harper on *Amos and Hosea*, in the *International Critical Commentary*, is a mine of valuable and exceedingly suggestive material. Mitchell's *Amos, An Essay on Exegesis*, is a popular and sympathetic interpretation of this great pioneer prophet. In its spiritual insight and suggestiveness, Smith's two-volume commentary, entitled *The Book of the Twelve Prophets*, is unsurpassed. The same is true of his *Book of Isaiah* (Vol. I) in the same *Expositor Bible Series*, although later study has modified many of its critical positions. The corresponding volumes in the *New Century Bible* are clear, concise, and written from the modern conservative, historical point of view. The volume on *Isaiah I* is by Whitehouse, the first volume of the *Minor Prophets* is by Horton, and the second by Driver. Professor Driver's all too brief commentary on the book of Jeremiah will be found helpful by the general reader, although it does not grapple with the fundamental textual and literary problems of that most difficult book. On the whole, Brown's *The Book of Jeremiah* is the best commentary in English, although the rigid limitations of the series to which it belongs leave much to be desired. Cheyne's *Jeremiah, His Life and Times*, still remains a valuable and sympathetic interpretation of the personality and message of the great prophet of Anathoth. Two volumes in the Sacred Books of the Bible, Cheyne's *Isaiah*, and Toy's *Ezekiel*, with their clear, bold, vigorous translations, have done much to reveal the spirit and soul of these ancient prophets. Professor Moulton, in his *Literary Study of the Bible*, and Gardiner, in *The Bible as English Literature*, have also performed a valuable service in arousing English readers to an appreciation of the great masterpieces which come from this period.

APPENDIX

II

GENERAL QUESTIONS AND SUBJECTS FOR SPECIAL RESEARCH

The *General Questions*, as in Volumes I and II, follow the main divisions of the book and are intended to guide the student in collecting and co-ordinating the more important facts contained in the biblical text for each section or in the accompanying notes.

The *Subjects for Special Research* are intended to point the way to further study in related lines, and, by means of detailed references, to introduce the reader to the most helpful passages in the best English books of reference. In class-room work many of these topics may be profitably assigned for personal research and report. The references are to pages, unless otherwise indicated. Ordinarily, several parallel references are given that the student may be able to utilize the book at hand. More detailed classified bibliographies will be found in the appendices of Volumes II–IV of the author's *Student's Old Testament*.

HISTORY OF NORTHERN ISRAEL

§ LXI. **The Division of the Hebrew Empire.** General Questions: 1. Describe the character of the records of Northern Israel's history. 2. Rehoboam's fatal mistakes in dealing with the northern tribes. 3. Nature and legitimacy of their claims. 4. The earlier rivalry between the tribes, and the effect of Solomon's rule. 5. Jeroboam's civil and religious policy. 6. The ultimate political and religious effects of the division.

Subjects for Special Research: 1. The structure and history of the books of Kings. *St. O. T.*, II, 16–21; Hastings, *D. B.* (one vol.), 520–2; II, 856–71; McFadyen, *Introduction to the O. T.*, 94–106; Driver, *Introd. to Lit. of the O. T.*, 185–200. 2. The situation and history of Shechem. Hastings, *D. B.*, IV, 484–6; *Encyc. Bib.*, IV, 4437–40; Smith, *H. G. H. L.*, 332–4. 3. The story of the prophet from Bethel. *St. O. T.*, II, § 61. 4. Compare the division of the northern and southern tribes with the issue at stake in the American Civil War.

§ LXII. **The Military Dynasties of Northern Israel.** General Questions: 1. Describe Baasha and his reign. 2. Events which led

to the accession of Omri. 3. Significance of the transfer of the capital to Samaria. 4. Omri's relations with Moab and Phœnicia. 5. Influence of Jezebel in Ahab's court. 6. Ahab's victory over the Arameans. 7. The dangers inherent in Ahab's policy.

SUBJECTS FOR SPECIAL RESEARCH: 1. The situation of Samaria. Hastings, *D. B.*, IV, 374–5; *Encyc. Bib.*, IV, 4255–6; Smith, *H. G. H. L.*, 346–50. 2. Recent excavations at Samaria. Current articles in *Harvard Journal of Theology; Pal. Expl. Fund Quarterly Statement* and *Biblical World*. 3. The situation and natural resources of Damascus. Hastings, *D. B.*, I, 545–8; *Encyc. Bib.*, I, 987–9; Smith, *H. G. H. L.*, 641–4, 647. 4. The advantages to Northern Israel of the alliance with Tyre. Hastings, *D. B.*, IV, 823–4; *Encyc. Bib.*, III, 3737–9, 3752–4.

§ LXIII. **Elijah's Work as a Religious and Social Reformer.** GENERAL QUESTIONS: 1. Describe the character and historical value of the Elijah stories. 2. Origin and personality of Elijah. 3. His demands upon Ahab and the nation. 4. Meaning of the revelation to Elijah at Horeb. 5. The call of Elisha. 6. Elijah's social and religious teachings. 7. His rôle in the development of Israel's faith.

SUBJECTS FOR SPECIAL RESEARCH: 1. The Phœnician religion. *Encyc. Bib.*, III, 3740–51; Hastings, *D. B.*, III, 860–2. 2. The territory of Gilead. Smith, *H. G. H. L.*, 548–51; Hastings, *D. B.*, II, 174–6; *Encyc. Bib.*, II, 1725–8. 3. The various estimates of Elijah's work. Harper, *Am. and Hos.*, xxxiv–xi; *Encyc. Bib.*, II, 1270–4. 4. The miraculous element in the Old Testament. Hastings, *D. B.*, III, 393.

§ LXIV. **The Decline of the House of Ahab.** GENERAL QUESTIONS: 1. Describe Shalmaneser II's battle against the allied states of Syria, and its significance. 2. Character of the official prophets in Israel. 3. Micaiah's prediction and his method of presenting it. 4. Popular Hebrew ideas of Jehovah and of the heavenly beings. 5. Virtues and faults of Ahab. 6. East-Jordan conquests of Mesha, king of Moab. 7. Campaign of the allied Hebrew kings against Moab. 8. Review of the record of Omri's dynasty.

SUBJECTS FOR SPECIAL RESEARCH: 1. The early history of Assyria. Hastings, *D. B.* (one vol.), 64–5; I, 180–3; *Encyc. Bib.*, I, 363–9; Goodspeed, *Hist. of Babs. and Assyrs.*, 155–202; Winckler, *Hist. of Bab. and Assyr.*, 177–217. 2. Reign of Shalmaneser II. Hastings, *D. B.*, I, 183–5; *Encyc. Bib.*, I, 369–70; Goodspeed, *Hist. of Babs. and Assyrs.*, 203–22; Winckler, *Hist. of Bab. and Assyr.*, 218–27. 3. Problems of Chronology. *St. O. T.*, II, 492–4; Hastings, *D. B.*, I, 399–403; *Encyc. Bib.*, I, 793–9. 4. Identification of the East-Jordan cities cap-

tured by Mesha, king of Moab. *Cf.* Smith, *H. G. H. L.*, and *Memoirs* of Pal. Expl. Fund.

§ LXV. **Jehu's Revolution and Its Consequences.** General Questions: 1. Describe the character, organization and influence of the prophetic guilds. 2. The different classes in Israel loyal to Jehovah. 3. Method in which Jehu's revolution was initiated. 4. Character of Jehu. 5. His measures in overthrowing Baalism and the house of Omri. 6. Significance of Jehu's tribute to Assyria. 7. Aramean conquests and oppression. 8. Reason why Northern Israel recovered its strength under Jeroboam II.

Subjects for Special Research: 1. The Black Obelisk of Shalmaneser II. *St. O. T.*, 496–7. 2. The contemporary kings of Damascus. *Encyc. Bib.*, I, 990–1. 3. Contemporary Assyrian History. Winckler, *Hist. of Bab. and Assyr.*, 229–35. 4. The Aramean kingdom of Zakar, king of Hamath and Laash. *Bib. World*, Feb., 1909, 79–84; Pognon, *Inscriptions de la Syrie*. 5. Historical value of the Elisha stories. *St. O. T.*, II, 18–20, §§ 81–92.

§ LXVI. **Amos's Arraignment of Northern Israel.** General Questions: 1. Describe Israel's national temper and hopes in the days of Jeroboam II. 2. Advance of Assyria. 3. Social changes and evils. 4. Popular idea of religious responsibility. 5. Evidence regarding the date of Amos's appearance. 6. Personality and training of the prophet. 7. Background of his opening address. 8. His tact in attracting his audience. 9. Principles established in his opening address.

Subjects for Special Research: 1. Compare the economic and social effects of Jeroboam's victories over the Arameans and those resulting from the American Civil War. 2. Assyrian history between 755 and 740 B.C. Goodspeed, *Hist. of Babs. and Assyrs.*, 217–29; Winckler, *Hist. of Bab. and Assyr.*, 235–9; Smith, *Bk. of the Twelve Prophs.*, I, 31–43. 3. The village of Tekoa. Mitchell, *Amos*, 1–4; Smith, *H. G. H. L.*, 314–5; *Encyc. Bib.*, IV, 4919; Harper, *Am. and Hos.*, ci; Smith, *Bk. of Twelve*, I, 74–6. 4. Amos's education. Harper, *Am. and Hos.*, civ–cix; Smith, *Bk. of Twelve*, I, 77–88; Mitchell, *Amos*, 4–8.

§ LXVII. **The Fatal Errors and Crimes of the Israelites.** General Questions: 1. Describe the three general divisions of the book of Amos. 2. The prophet's method of reasoning. 3. His proof that he was divinely called to prophesy. 4. The crimes that were proving the nation's destruction. 5. Amos's estimate of the value of the popular ceremonial institutions. 6. His positive spiritual message to the North-

ern Israelites. 7. His conception of the duty of the rich and ruling classes. 8. The exact nature of the judgment that he saw impending, and the agent.

SUBJECTS FOR SPECIAL RESEARCH: 1. The making of a prophet. Smith, *Bk. of Twelve*, I, 88–106. 2. Amos's literary style. Mitchell, *Amos*, 8–11; Harper, *Am. and Hos.*, cxxxviii–cxl. 3. The different figures employed by Amos to picture the fate of the guilty classes in Israel.

§ LXVIII. **The Inevitable Consequences of Israel's Crimes.** GENERAL QUESTIONS: 1. Describe the form and meaning of Amos's first three visions. 2. Their relation to his preceding teachings. 3. Amaziah's action in attacking Amos. 4. Meaning of Amos's reply. 5. Significance of his subsequent visions. 6. Motives that gave rise to the later appendix to the prophecies of Amos. 7. The theological ideas underlying Amos's sermons. 8. His kinship with modern socialists. 9. His fundamental social teachings. 10. Their applicability to modern conditions.

SUBJECTS FOR SPECIAL RESEARCH: 1. The literary form of ancient oracles. Hastings, *D. B.*, III, 629; Frazer, *Golden Bough*. 2. Amos's pedagogical methods. 3. The tenets of modern socialism. Hillquit, *Socialism in Theory and Practice;* Spargo, *Significance of Modern Socialism*. 4. Amos's message as a whole. Harper, *Am. and Hos.*, cx–cxxiv; Cornill, *Prophs. of Israel*, 42–6; Mitchell, *Amos*, 185–209.

§ LXIX. **The Beginnings of Jehovah's Revelation by Hosea.** GENERAL QUESTIONS: 1. Describe the evidence regarding Hosea's date and nationality. 2. The two groups of his prophecies. 3. Meaning of the names given to his children. 4. Infidelity of his wife. 5. The fundamental truths revealed by his tragic domestic experience. 6. Application of these truths to Israel. 7. The universal principles first proclaimed by Hosea. 8. The making of a prophet, as illustrated by Hosea's experience.

SPECIAL SUBJECTS FOR RESEARCH: 1. The Babylonian and Hebrew laws regarding adultery. *St. O. T.*, IV, § 70; Kent, *Messages of Israel's Lawgivers*, 92–94; Johns, *Bab. and Assyr. Laws, Letters and Contracts*, 54, 117, 118. 2. Testimony of the prophets regarding the nature of the prophetic call. Marti, *Religion of the O. T.*, 141–7; Davidson, *O. T. Prophecy*, 144–58; *Encyc. Bib.*, III, 3867–71. 3. Later supplements to Hosea's sermons, *St. O. T.*, III, § 17.

§ LXX. **Jehovah's Charges Against Guilty Israel.** GENERAL QUESTIONS: 1. Describe the political, social and moral conditions

reflected in Hos. 4–13. 2. The literary form of these addresses. 3. Specific charges brought by Hosea against the priests and prophets. 4. Importance of popular education in Hosea's mind. 5. His distinction between false and true repentance. 6. Israel's mistaken foreign policy. 7. Hosea's attitude toward idolatry and the popular religion. 8. Review the reasons why he saw no hope for his nation as a whole.

SUBJECTS FOR SPECIAL RESEARCH: 1. Analyze the thoughts of Hosea 4^1–5^{14}. *St. O. T.*, III, §§ 18, 19. 2. Characteristics of Hosea's literary style. 3. Paraphrase the thought of Hosea 9^1–10^{15}. *St. O. T.*, III, §§ 23–5.

§ LXXI. **Jehovah's Tender Love for His People.** GENERAL QUESTIONS: 1. Describe the different figures employed by Hosea in picturing Jehovah's love and care for his people. 2. Content of the prayer of penitence that the prophet desired to have his people utter. 3. Jehovah's attitude toward true penitence as interpreted by Hosea. 4. Personality of Hosea compared with that of Amos. 5. His new teachings regarding Jehovah's character. 6. Universal principles that he proclaimed. 7. Discuss his place among the great religious teachers of the past.

SUBJECTS FOR SPECIAL RESEARCH: 1. Paraphrase the thought of Hosea $11^{1\text{-}9}$. 2. Evidence for and against the conclusion that Hosea is the author of the last chapter of his prophecy. *St. O. T.*, III, § 29; Harper, *Am. and Hos.*, 408–9. 3. Comparison of Hosea's doctrine of repentance with that of other biblical writers. Smith, *Bk. of the Twelve*, I, 333–45; Hastings, *D. B.*, IV, 225–6. 4. In what respects did Hosea anticipate the teachings of Jesus?

§ LXXII. **The Fate of Northern Israel.** GENERAL QUESTIONS: 1. Describe the character and policy of the successors of Jeroboam II. 2. Tiglath-pileser IV's invasion of Palestine in 733 B.C. 3. Fate of Damascus and Northern Israel. 4. Policy of Hoshea. 5. Reasons for rebelling. 6. Fate of Samaria and of the captives. 7. Origin of the Samaritans. 8. For what reason is Northern Israel's history significant? 9. Formulate the new truths proclaimed by its prophets.

SUBJECTS FOR SPECIAL RESEARCH: 1. The reign and policy of Tiglath-pileser IV (III in older works). Winckler, *Hist. of Bab. and Assyr.*, 237–42; Goodspeed, *Hist. of Babs. and Assyrs.* 223–42. 2. Reign of Sargon. Winckler, *Hist. of Bab. and Assyr.*, 243–8; Goodspeed, *Hist. of Babs. and Assyrs.*, 243–8. 3. History of the Samaritans. Montgomery, *Hist. of the Samaritans;* Hastings, *D. B.*, IV, 375–6; *Encyc. Bib.*, IV, 4256–64.

APPENDIX

THE ASSYRIAN PERIOD OF JUDAH'S HISTORY

§ LXXIII. **From Rehoboam to Uzziah.** General Questions: 1. Why was Judah's history during this period uneventful compared with that of Northern Israel? 2. Describe the invasion of Shishak. 3. Asa's alliance with Damascus and its effects. 4. Consequences of Jehoshaphat's alliance with Northern Israel. 5. Accession of Athaliah. 6. The revolution which placed Jehoash on the throne. 7. The early Judean prophetic history. 8. The repair of the temple. 9. Fate of Jehoash. 10. Amaziah's wars.

Subjects for Special Research: 1. The policy and reign of Sheshonk I, king of Egypt. Breasted, *Hist. of the Anc. Egs.*, 360–4. 2. Probable fate of the ark. *St. O. T.*, IV, 150; Hastings, *D. B.*, I, 150. 3. Evidence of the growing power of the Jerusalem priesthood. Smith, *Jerusalem*, II, 110–2.

§ LXXIV. **The Reign of Uzziah and the Call of Isaiah.** General Questions: 1. Describe Uzziah's foreign and home policy. 2. Effect upon the material condition of the Israelites. 3. Resulting social conditions. 4. The need of a courageous prophet. 5. Personality of the young Isaiah. 6. Background of his early vision. 7. The psychological experience which it reflects. 8. Impression upon Isaiah's faith and life. 9. His task as a prophet.

Subjects for Special Research: 1. Value of the Chronicler's ecclesiastical history of Judah and the temple. *St. O. T.*, II, 22–8; McFadyen, *Introd. to O. T.*, 347–56; Driver, *L. O. T.*, 516–35. 2. Chronicler's account of the reigns of Uzziah and Jotham. *St. O. T.*, II, §§ 117, 118. 3. Compare the ways in which Amos, Hosea and Isaiah each received the prophetic call. Smith, *Isaiah*, I, 57–90.

§ LXXV. **Isaiah's Early Social Sermons.** General Questions: 1. Give a literary analysis of Isaiah 1–39. 2. Describe the different kinds of editorial revision which are revealed. 3. The different periods of Israel's activity. 4. Indications that Isaiah 5 contains the prophet's earliest recorded address. 6. Literary form and theme of his song. 7. Crimes of Judah's leaders. 8. Signs of national dissolution. 9. Nature of the judgment that Isaiah predicted for his nation. 10. Formulate the social principles laid down by Isaiah.

Subjects for Special Research: 1. The successive stages of literary editorship through which the book of Isaiah has passed. Hastings, *D. B.*, II, 486–7; *Encyc. Bib.*, II, 2189–2207; McFadyen, *Introd. to O. T.*,

107–39. 2. The characteristics of Isaiah's literary style. Gardiner, *Bible as Eng. Lit.*, 223–31. 3. Compare social conditions in Judah in the days of Isaiah with those in America and England to-day.

§ LXXVI. **Isaiah's Advice to King and People in 735 B.C.** General Questions: 1. Describe the advance of Assyria and its effect on the states of Palestine. 2. The three lines of policy open to Ahaz. 3. Isaiah's counsel and his reasons. 4. Ahaz's choice. 5. Isaiah's literary figures describing the coming national disaster. 6. His object lessons. 7. The confidence which he placed in his disciples. 8. Actual consequences of Ahaz's selfish policy.

Subjects for Special Research: 1. Different interpretations of Isaiah's sign. *St. O. T.*, III, § 35; Smith, *Isaiah I*, 113–8; Whitehouse, *Isaiah*, 131–5; *Journal of Bib. Lit.*, 1895, 19–36; 1897, 131–5. 2. Review the six or seven distinct ways in which Isaiah sought to impress his message. 3. Probable date and meaning of the messianic portraits of the ideal king, in Isaiah 9^{1-7}, 11. Hastings, *D. B.*, II, 487–9; Whitehouse, *Isaiah*, 151–4, 177–80; Cheyne, *Introd. to the Bk. of Isaiah*, 44–6.

§ LXXVII. **The Great Crisis of 701 B.C.** General Questions: 1. Describe the influences which tended to lead the people of Judah into rebellion against Assyria. 2. Isaiah's method of teaching in 711 B.C. 3. Effect of Sargon's death in 705 B.C. upon the states tributary to Assyria. 4. Significance of the embassy of Merodach-baladan. 5. Isaiah's warnings and counsel in 704–1 B.C. 6. Attitude of the leaders. 7. Sennacherib's advance. 8. The ultimate fate of Judah and Jerusalem. 9. Isaiah's message in the hour of national distress.

Subjects for Special Research: 1. The character and policy of Sennacherib. Goodspeed, *Hist. of Babs. and Assyrs.*, 265–83; Winckler, *Hist. of Bab. and Assyr.*, 255–60. 2. Meaning of Isaiah's sermon regarding Ariel, Isaiah 29^{1-14}. *St. O. T.*, III, § 42; Smith, *Isaiah I*, 209–20. 3. The problems and historical significance of Isaiah 22^{15-23}. *St. O. T.*, III, § 48; Smith, *Isaiah I*, 317–9. 4. Reasons why the prophets rejected the popular cultus. Marti, *Religion of the O. T.*, 147–59.

§ LXXVIII. **Micah's Sermons and Hezekiah's Reformation.** General Questions: 1. Describe the structure and contents of the different sections of the book of Micah. 2. Evidence regarding the date of his work. 3. His home and training. 4. The danger that he saw approaching. 5. His method of giving the warning. 6. His charges against the civil and religious leaders of Judah. 7. His dis-

tinction between a true and a false prophet. 8. The way in which the calamity which he predicted was averted. 9. Nature of Hezekiah's reformation. 10. The prophetic definition of true religion.

SUBJECTS FOR SPECIAL RESEARCH: 1. The western approaches to Judah. Smith, *H. G. H. L.*, 201–44, 286–9; *Bk. of the Twelve*, I, 375–8. 2. Modern examples of oriental oppression. *Cf.* Thomson, *The Land and the Book*, and books of oriental travel. 3. Micah's debt to Amos and Isaiah.

§ LXXIX. **Jerusalem's Deliverance through Isaiah's Counsels.** GENERAL QUESTIONS: 1. Describe the evidence that Sennacherib made a second western campaign about 690 B.C. 2. The situation in Judah at this later crisis. 3. Sennacherib's demands. 4. Isaiah's counsels and his reasons. 5. Cause of Sennacherib's retreat. 6. Significance of the deliverance. 7. Isaiah's work as social reformer and statesman. 8. His conception of God, and its relation to his life-work.

SUBJECTS FOR SPECIAL RESEARCH: 1. Evidence that the narrative of Isaiah 36, 37 (II Kgs. 18^{17}–19^{37}) is composite. *St. O. T.*, II, § 124; Smith, *Jerusalem*, II, 165–70; Cornill, *Introd. to the Canon. Bks. of the O. T.*, 282–3. 2. Assyrian and other evidence of a second western campaign of Sennacherib. Smith, *Jerusalem*, II, 170–3; Hastings, *D. B.*, I, 188; Budge, *Hist. of Egypt*, VI, 141–9. 3. Comparison of Isaiah's personality with that of Amos and Hosea.

§ LXXX. **The Reaction under Manasseh and the Decline of Assyria.** GENERAL QUESTIONS: 1. Describe the causes that led to a religious reaction under Manasseh. 2. Character and policy of the king. 3. Effects of the reaction upon the popular religion. 4. Upon the followers of the prophets. 5. Assyria's glories under Esarhaddon and Ashurbanipal. 6. Sudden decline of the great empire. 7. Theme and probable date of Nahum's prophecy. 8. His analysis of Assyria's weakness. 9. His description of Assyria's fall. 10. Underlying principles. 11. Distinctive teachings of each of the prophets of the Assyrian period.

SUBJECTS FOR SPECIAL RESEARCH: 1. General characteristics of the Assyrian religion. Hastings, *D. B.* (one vol.), 70; I, 177; extra vol., 532–83; Jastrow, *Religion of Bab. and Assyr.*; Rogers, *Relig. of Bab. and Assyr.* 2. The Assyrian conquest of Egypt. Breasted, *Hist. of the Anc. Egyptians*, 378–83. 3. The conception of Jehovah proclaimed by the prophets of the Assyrian period. Addis, *Heb. Religion*, 148–156; Marti, *Religion of the O. T.*, 128–141.

APPENDIX

THE LAST HALF CENTURY OF JUDAH'S HISTORY

§ LXXXI. **Zephaniah's Reform Sermons.** General Questions: 1. Describe the influences that must have surrounded the young Josiah. 2. Evidence that Zephaniah belonged to the Judean royal line. 3. Date and occasion of his prophecy. 4. Contents of the book of Zephaniah. 5. The classes in Judah which the prophet condemns. 6. His conception of the coming day of Jehovah. 7. His prophetic aim and method.

Subjects for Special Research: 1. Origin and history of the Scythians. *Herodotus*, I, 103–5; *Encyc. Bib.*, IV, 4330–9. 2. Old Testament teachings regarding the day of Jehovah. Hastings, *D. B.*, I, 735–8. 3. Later appendices to the book of Zephaniah. Cornill, *Introd. to the Canon. Bks. of the O. T.*, 357–8; Smith, *Bk. of the Twelve*, II, 43–5; *Encyc. Bib.*, IV, 5405–7.

§ LXXXII. **Jeremiah's Call and Earlier Reform Sermons.** General Questions: 1. Describe Jeremiah's inheritance and youthful environment. 2. The way in which he was called to be a prophet. 3. His personality as thus revealed. 4. The evils in Judah which he condemned. 5. What he demanded of his people. 6. The northern foe to which he alludes. 7. The principles underlying these early sermons.

Subjects for Special Research: 1. The situation of Anathoth. Smith, *H. G. H. L.*, 315–16. 2. Poetic form of Jeremiah's sermons. Hastings, *D. B.*, II, 575–6; Brown, *Jeremiah*, xix–xx. 3. The complete version of Jeremiah's early reform sermons. *St. O. T.*, III, §§ 67, 68; Brown, *Jeremiah*, 37–76. 4. Comparison between the spirit and contents of the earlier reform sermons of Zephaniah and Jeremiah.

§ LXXXIII. **The Great Reformation under Josiah.** General Questions: 1. Describe the different classes of reformers at work in Judah. 2. Was the finding of the law in the temple accidental or intentional? 3. Describe the method in which the new code was made the law of the realm. 4. Nature of the resulting reforms. 5. Contents of the new law-book. 6. Structure of the present book of Deuteronomy. 7. The different stages in its literary history. 8. Its characteristics.

Subjects for Special Research: 1. What evils denounced by Zephaniah and Jeremiah were put down by Josiah? 2. How far did Josiah's reformation fall short of the demands of these prophets? 3. The detailed history of the book of Deuteronomy. *St. O. T.*, IV, 31–3; Driver, *Deuteronomy*, xxxiv-lxvii; Hastings, *D. B.*, I, 601–3; *Encyc. Bib.*,

I, 1079–90; Cornill, *Introd. to Canon. Bks. of the O. T.*, 50–75. 4. Unity and structure of Deuteronomy. *St. O. T.*, IV, 33–5; Driver, *Deuteronomy*, lxvii–lxxvii.

§ LXXXIV. **Ceremonial, Civil and Philanthropic Regulations of the Deuteronomic Code.** General Questions: 1. Describe the present-day value of the Deuteronomic laws. 2. The pre-exilic sacrificial customs. 3. The early laws regarding ceremonial cleanliness. 4. Duties of the Levitical priests. 5. Their means of support. 6. Date and method of celebrating the three great annual festivals. 7. Development of the Hebrew judicial system. 8. Limitations imposed upon the king. 9. The different regulations intended to improve the condition of the poor and dependent.

Subjects for Special Research: 1. Earlier and later laws regarding sacrifice. *St. O. T.*, IV, §§ 187–209. 2. The pre-exilic priests. *St. O. T.*, IV, §§ 148–51; Smith, *Jerusalem*, I, 351–66. 3. Comparison of the Babylonian and Hebrew judicial systems. *St. O. T.*, IV, §§ 45–53; Johns, *Bab. and Assyr. Laws, Letters and Contracts*, 80–99. 4. The unique and permanent elements in the Deuteronomic code. *St. O. T.*, IV, 123; *Encyc. Bib.*, I, 1091–4; Hastings, *D. B.*, I, 598–9.

§ LXXXV. **Jeremiah's Experiences as Patriot and Preacher under Jehoiakim.** General Questions: 1. Describe the latter part of Josiah's reign. 2. Evidence that he conquered part of the territory of Northern Israel. 3. His death at Megiddo. 4. Its effect upon the religious situation in Judah. 5. Necho's Asiatic conquests. 6. Reasons why Jehoiakim was placed on the throne. 7. His character. 8. Persecution of Jeremiah by the men of Anathoth. 9. The prophet's lament. 10. Contents of his temple discourse. 11. Basis of the charges made against him. 12. Grounds for his acquittal. 13. Fate of the prophet Uriah. 14. Jeremiah's public imprisonment.

Subjects for Special Research: 1. Examples of changing the name of a king at his accession, and the probable explanation. 2. Reign and policy of Necho. Breasted, *Hist. of the Anc. Egyptians*, 404–7. 3. The two versions of Jeremiah's temple discourse. *St. O. T.*, III, §§ 75–6. 4. Jeremiah's personality. Cornill, *Prophs. of Israel*, 91–102; *Encyc. Bib.*, II, 2371.

§ LXXXVI. **First and Second Collections of Jeremiah's Sermons.** General Questions: 1. Describe the reasons which influenced Jeremiah to commit his earlier sermons to writing. 2. The method in which this was accomplished. 3. The probable contents of the first edition. 4. Its fate at the hand of Jehoiakim. 5. Probable

scope of the second edition of Jeremiah's prophecies. 6. Contents and structure of the present book of Jeremiah. 7. Evidence that it is the work of many different editors. 8. Its probable literary history.

SUBJECTS FOR SPECIAL RESEARCH: 1. Hebrew writing material. Hastings, *D. B.*, IV, 944–50. 2. Different explanations of the present structure of the book of Jeremiah. Cornill, *Introd. to the Canon. Bks. of the O. T.*, 295–313; Hastings, *D. B.*, II, 575; *Encyc. Bib.*, II, 2372–90; McFadyen, *Introd. to the O. T.*, 144–61. 3. The different periods of Jeremiah's activity. Hastings, *D. B.*, II, 569–73; *Encyc. Bib.*, II, 2366–8.

§ LXXXVII. **Events Leading to the First Babylonian Captivity.** GENERAL QUESTIONS: 1. Describe the rise of the Chaldeans. 2. Necho's defeat at Carchemish. 3. Probable date of the prophecy of Habakkuk. 4. Present structure of this prophecy. 5. Its theme and teachings. 6. Character and achievements of Nebuchadrezzar. 7. Jehoiakim's rebellion. 8. Capture of Jerusalem. 9. Details of the first captivity.

SUBJECTS FOR SPECIAL RESEARCH: 1. The fall of Nineveh. Goodspeed, *Hist. of Babs. and Assyrs.*, 320–30; Winckler, *Hist. of Bab. and Assyr.*, 281–5. 2. Nebuchadrezzar's reign and policy. Goodspeed, *Hist. of Babs. and Assyrs.*, 337–47; Winckler, *Hist. of Bab. and Assyr.*, 313–8. 3. Different dates attributed to the prophecy of Habakkuk. Cornill, *Introd. to the Canon. Bks. of the O. T.*, 351–4; McFadyen, *Introd. to the O. T.*, 210–4; *Encyc. Bib.*, II, 1922–27; Driver, *L. O. T.*, 337–40. 4. The psalm in Habakkuk 3. Cornill, *Introd. to Canon. Bks. of the O. T.*, 354–5; *Encyc. Bib.*, II, 1927–8.

§ LXXXVIII. **Ezekiel's Messages to the People of Judah.** GENERAL QUESTIONS: 1. Describe Ezekiel's ancestry and early education. 2. His personal characteristics. 3. His call and sense of responsibility. 4. His analysis of conditions in Judah. 5. Methods of impressing his teaching. 6. Reasons for his declaration that Judah would be destroyed. 7. His doctrine of individual responsibility.

SUBJECTS FOR SPECIAL RESEARCH: 1. Ezekiel's initial vision. Sanders and Kent, *Mess. of the Later Prophs.*, 28–9; Smith, *O. T. Hist.*, 302–4; Redpath, *Ezekiel*, 1–7. 2. Influence of his priestly training upon Ezekiel's thought and literary style. Hastings, *D. B.* (extra vol.), 701–4. 3. Ezekiel's use of symbols. McFadyen, *Introd. to O. T.*, 169–72; Sanders and Kent, *Mess. of Later Prophs.*, 23–8.

§ LXXXIX. **Jeremiah's Activity in the Reign of Zedekiah.** GENERAL QUESTIONS: 1. Describe the attitude of Semitic peoples toward

those in abnormal mental states. 2. The rôle of the false prophets in Judah's history. 3. The test of true prophecy. 4. The reason which influenced the people of Judah to rebel against Nebuchadrezzar. 5. Liberation of the Hebrew slaves. 6. Jeremiah's experiences during the final siege. 7. His counsels to king and people. 8. His future hope for his race.

SUBJECTS FOR SPECIAL RESEARCH: 1. History of the false prophets. Hastings, *D. B.*, IV, 116–8; *Encyc. Bib.*, III, 3874–6; Davidson, *O. T. Prophecy*, 285–308. 2. Jerusalem's military strength. Smith, *Jerusalem*, I, 31–49, 181–249, 297–309. 3. Teachings of the pre-exilic prophets regarding the future of their race.

§ XC. **The Final Capture of Jerusalem and the End of the Hebrew State.** GENERAL QUESTIONS: 1. Describe the final capture of Jerusalem. 2. Destruction of the city. 3. The captives transported to Babylon. 4. Survivors who remained in Palestine. 5. Character and fortunes of the Judean state under the rule of Gedaliah. 6. The flight to Egypt. 7. Jeremiah's fate. 8. Significance of his life-work as patriot and prophet. 9. His abiding message to the race.

SUBJECTS FOR SPECIAL RESEARCH: 1. Various estimates of the numbers of the Hebrews transported to Babylon. McCurdy's *Hist., Prophecy, and the Monuments*, III, 290–1. 2. Jeremiah's place among the great religious teachers of the race. 3. Nature of divine inspiration and revelation, as illustrated by the experiences of the pre-exilic Hebrew prophets. Hastings, *D. B.*, IV, 114–6; *Encyc. Bib.*, III, 3867-73.

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